

**John Locke Scripps'**

**1860 Campaign**


**Life of  
Abraham Lincoln**

**Annotated**



**The only biography of himself that Abraham Lincoln  
ever authorized, revised and endorsed.**





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FOREWORD AND NOTES BY  
M. L. HOUSER

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# LIFE OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

## CHAPTER I.

### EARLY LIFE.

His Ancestors—His Grandfather Murdered by Indians—His Parents—An Only Child—Adverse Circumstances—Western Schools Fifty Years Ago—Removal to Indiana—Work in the Forest—Letter-Writer for the Neighborhood—The First Great Borrow—Character of his Mother—Reading the Scriptures—Self-Educated—First Books—Interesting Incident of Boyhood—Early Western Preachers.

IT is not known at what period the ancestors of Abraham Lincoln came to America. The first account that has been obtained of them dates back about one hundred and fifty years, at which time they were living in Berks County, Pennsylvania, and were members of the Society of Friends. Whence or when they came to that region is not known.

About the middle of the last century, the great-grandfather of Abraham Lincoln removed from Berks County, Pennsylvania, to Rockingham County, Virginia. There Abraham Lincoln, the grandfather, and Thomas Lincoln, the father of the subject of this sketch, were born. Abraham, the grandfather, had four brothers—Isaac, Jacob, John, and Thomas—descendants of whom are now living in Virginia, North Carolina, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Missouri. Abraham removed to Kentucky about the year 1780, and four years thereafter, while engaged in opening a farm, he was surprised and killed by Indians; leaving a widow, three sons, and two daughters. The eldest son, Mordecai, remained in Kentucky until late in life, when he removed to Hancock County, Illinois, where he shortly afterward died, and where his descendants still live. The second son, Josiah, settled many years ago on Blue River, in Harrison County, Indiana. The eldest daughter, Mary, was married to Ralph Crume, and some of her descendants are now living in Breckenridge County, Kentucky. The second daughter, Nancy, was married to William Brumfield, and her descendants are supposed to be living in Kentucky.

Thomas, the youngest son, and father of the subject of this sketch, by the death of his father and the very narrow circumstances of his mother, was thrown upon his own resources while yet a child. Traveling from neighborhood to neighborhood, working wherever he could find employment, he grew

up literally without education. He finally settled in Hardin County, where, in 1806, he was married to Nancy Hanks, whose family had also come from Virginia. The fruits of this union were a daughter and two sons. One of the latter died in infancy; the daughter died later in life, having been married, but leaving no issue. The sole survivor is the subject of this sketch.

Abraham Lincoln was born in Hardin County, Kentucky, February 12th, 1809. It would be difficult to conceive of more unpromising circumstances than those under which he was ushered into life. His parents were poor and uneducated. They were under the social ban which the presence of slavery always entails upon poverty. Their very limited means and the low grade of the neighboring schools, precluded the expectation of conferring upon their children the advantages of even a common English education. The present inhabitants of the Western States can have but a faint idea of the schools which fifty years ago constituted the only means of education accessible to the poorer classes. The teachers were, for the most part, ignorant, uncultivated men, rough of speech, uncouth in manners, and rarely competent to teach beyond the simplest rudiments of learning—"spelling, reading, writing," and sometimes a very little arithmetic. The books of study then in vogue, would not now be tolerated in schools of the lowest grade. The school-house, constructed of logs, floorless, windowless, and without inclosure, was in admirable harmony with teacher, text-books, and the mode of imparting instruction.

In his seventh year, Abraham was sent for short periods to two of these schools, and while attending them progressed so far as to learn to write. For this acquirement he manifested a great fondness. It was his custom to form letters, to write words and sen-

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## FOREWORD

John Locke Scripps was born of English parentage in 1818 near Cape Girardeau, Missouri. In 1836, his family removed to Rushville, Illinois. Young Scripps graduated with first honors from McKendree College, Lebanon, Illinois, and then joined the faculty as Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy. Later, he studied law. He practiced his profession at Rushville until 1847, then went to Chicago.

Finding that he liked literary work better than legal practice, he took a position with a publishing concern; and he soon became the principal writer and chief editor of the *Chicago Tribune*.

He sold out his interest in the *Tribune* early in 1852, and with William Bross started the *Democratic Press*, a Free Soil paper. In it, he supported Douglas until the repeal of the Missouri Compromise; then he left Douglas, and championed the cause of the new Republican party.

The *Press* and the *Tribune* consolidated in 1858, and Scripps became the managing editor of the new *Press and Tribune*. This paper was probably the most influential support that Lincoln had, both during his contest with Douglas and in his campaign for nomination as President.

Scripps and Mr. Lincoln were warm personal friends; Scripps was a frequent visitor in the Lincoln home. It is claimed that when Mrs. Lincoln shopped in Chicago before going to Washington, Mrs. Scripps was invited to accompany her.

Mr. Lincoln was nominated for President by the Republican national convention at Chicago on May 18, 1860. A campaign "Life" was needed; Scripps was selected to write it. He immediately went to Springfield, and secured from Lincoln the short autobiography which covers about six pages of the Nicolay & Hay *Complete Works*. With what he could glean from that sketch, from repeated talks with Lincoln, interviews with Herndon and other friends of the candidate, Ford's *History of Illinois*, and from political records, Scripps wrote a "Life" of about sixteen thousand words. Most of it was written in New York, where Scripps had gone to secure the co-operation of Horace Greeley. They decided that the biography should be issued simultaneously by the New York *Tribune* and the Chicago *Press and Tribune*.

Lincoln insisted that every statement, however unimportant, should be meticulously accurate; to insure that, he required that the manuscript be submitted to him before publication. Scripps afterwards said that the way Lincoln revised it and deleted some of its most readable and interesting passages was disconcerting, not to say discouraging.

An advertisement of the New York edition, called "Tribune Tract, No. 6," reads as follows:

VI. THE LIFE OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN: By an Illinois Republican, who knows well the man and his history. A large compact pamphlet of 32 double-column pages, for general circulation as a campaign document. Price 4 cents a copy, 40 cents per dozen, \$2.50 per hundred, \$20 per

thousand. If required by mail, one cent additional must be sent to prepay postage. Cash orders are solicited, and will be filled in order of their reception.

The *Press and Tribune* announced its edition, called "Campaign Document, No. 1," in a notice which read:

We have issued a campaign Biography of the Republican standard bearer, in a style so compact and cheap, that with suitable efforts on the part of clubs, canvassers, and local committees, it may reach every voter in the Northwest before the campaign is on. It is a pamphlet of 32 pages of class type, double columns and in the style and shape of the campaign life of Colonel Fremont issued in 1856. It has been prepared with great care, and may be considered a reliable and authentic narrative of the life of Abraham Lincoln, embracing also the substance of his debates with Mr. Douglas in 1858, and a complete history of that remarkable campaign. It has been the purpose of the writer to make it the document of the times. A copy should be placed in the hands of every man in the Northwest who can read the English language.

Many copies were sold, probably several hundred thousand; the exact number is not now known. It was generally considered "just another campaign 'Life'," and most of the copies were soon either lost or destroyed. Some years later, when Scripps' daughter wished to print a new edition, she was unable for some time to find a complete copy. A good specimen of the New York edition was recently quoted at \$35; those bearing the Chicago imprint bring several times as much.

A number of campaign biographies of Lincoln appeared at about the same time, but the one by Scripps had by far the largest circulation. Because it was written for use as a campaign document, special emphasis was placed on the issues of that campaign. The fact remains, however, that it is the only biography of himself that Mr. Lincoln ever authorized, revised, and indorsed; and, for this reason, it is probably the most important "Life of Abraham Lincoln" ever published.

—M. L. H.

NOTE: Authority for the statements made above may be found in *Herndon's Lincoln: The True Story of a Great Life*, by Herndon & Weik; *Abraham Lincoln and His Books*, by William E. Barton; *Campaign Text-Book for 1860*, by Greeley & Cleveland; *Lincoln Lore*, No. 57, by Louis A. Warren; an article entitled *John Locke Scripps, Lincoln's Campaign Biographer*, by Grace Locke Scripps Dyche, in *Transactions*, Ill. Sta. His. Soc., 1924; copies of the two editions of the Scripps pamphlet; and letters from the *Chicago Tribune* and the *New York Herald-Tribune*.

For complete titles of works referred to in the notes, see list of authorities in the appendix.

# LIFE OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN

## CHAPTER I

### EARLY LIFE

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About the middle of the last century, the great-grandfather of Abraham Lincoln removed from Berks County, Pennsylvania, to Rockingham County, Virginia. There Abraham Lincoln, the grandfather, and Thomas Lincoln, the father of the subject of this sketch, were born. Abraham, the grandfather, had four brothers—Isaac, Jacob, John, and Thomas—descendants of whom are now living in Virginia, North Carolina, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Missouri. Abraham removed to Kentucky about the year 1780, and four years thereafter, while engaged in opening a farm, he was

<sup>1</sup> We now know, of course, that his first American ancestor was one Samuel Lincoln who came to Hingham, Massachusetts, from England in 1737. Many of the descendants of Samuel Lincoln were men of wealth, learning, and influence. One was head of the Massachusetts bar, Attorney General and Secretary of State of the United States, and declined an appointment to the Supreme Court. Another was Governor of Maine, an orator, and a writer of more than ordinary ability. (Lincoln, 157-159, 287-289; Tarbell (a), 1-2; Whitney (b), i, 2-3)

One of Samuel Lincoln's sons, Mordecai, became a wealthy manufacturer. This Mordecai's oldest son, also called Mordecai, went to Pennsylvania. He, too, amassed a considerable fortune. The second Mordecai's oldest son, John, removed to Virginia; and was a well-to-do, respected, and influential citizen. John's eldest son, Abraham, followed Boone into Kentucky; he bought there several large tracts of land; and when he was killed by an Indian, he left a comfortable estate. The youngest son of this Abraham, Thomas Lincoln, father of the President, was first a common laborer, then became a skilled carpenter. As a young man, he appears to have been energetic and successful; and it was probably through his own efforts that he paid for a house and lot at Elizabethtown and for two farms. Until overtaken by misfortune, and handicapped and beggared by a swarm of the unworthy relatives of his wife, Thomas was a prosperous, well-respected citizen. He was enough of a leader that practically all of his wife's immediate relatives followed him when he removed to Indiana. (Lincoln, 5, 15, 43, 92, 333; Tarbell (a), 233; (b), i, 4; (c), 40-41, 108, 132-133; Barton (a), i, 9-13, 30-32; (b), 338; Warren (a), 4, 11, 38-57, 299; Murr, 31; Brown (b), i, 86-87)

Herndon says that Abraham Lincoln arose from a "stagnant putrid pool," but a simple statement of the facts now known regarding Lincoln's ancestry and early environment is a complete refutation. In the last chapter of the work by Beveridge, we are told that Lincoln "emerged out of the most unpromising material—almost out of nothing." Mr. Lincoln himself would be the last to believe that the greatest character of an age could emerge "almost out of nothing." He said: "There are no accidents in my philosophy. Every effect must have its cause." Even Frederick Trevor Hill, in his splendid work, *Lincoln, The Lawyer*, devotes several pages to rather scornful remarks about those who believe that Lincoln inherited his aptitude for law; and Dr. Hill does this because none of Lincoln's immediate ancestors were lawyers. One might now reply that none of Colonel Lindbergh's ancestors, near or remote, were aviators, either; but that is no reason for doubting that Lindbergh inherited from his Viking forebears those qualities which make him an intrepid explorer and a skillful flier. This annotator is one of those who believe that in Lincoln's ancestry may be found a reason for every natural quality that he possessed. (Herndon, ix, 438; Beveridge, ii, 713; Hill, 3-6)



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surprised and killed by Indians; leaving a widow, three sons, and two daughters. The eldest son, Mordecai, remained in Kentucky until late in life, when he removed to Hancock County, Illinois, where he shortly afterward died, and where his descendants still live. The second son, Josiah, settled many years ago on Blue River, in Harrison County, Indiana. The eldest daughter, Mary, was married to Ralph Crume, and some of her descendants are now living in Breckenridge County, Kentucky. The second daughter, Nancy, was married to William Brumfield, and her descendants are supposed to be living in Kentucky.

Thomas, the youngest son, and father of the subject of this sketch, by the death of his father and the very narrow circumstances of his mother, was thrown upon his own resources while yet a child.<sup>1</sup> Traveling from neighborhood to neighborhood, working wherever he could find employment, he grew up literally without education.<sup>2</sup> He finally settled in Hardin County, where, in 1806, he was married to Nancy Hanks, whose family had also come from Virginia. The fruits of this union were a daughter and two sons. One of the latter died in infancy; the daughter died later in life, having been married, but leaving no issue. The sole survivor is the subject of this sketch.

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<sup>1</sup> Later researches show that Bersheba (or Bathsheba) Lincoln maintained a home for her family in Washington County, Kentucky, until the marriage of her youngest daughter, with whom she afterwards lived. Thomas no doubt secured such work as he could get among their neighbors, or wherever he could find it—a commendable thing for a boy with a widowed mother to do—; but it seems that he always had a comfortable home to which he could return between periods of employment. After the marriage of his younger sister, both she and his mother lived in a home which he provided. (Warren, (a), 14-15, 115; Barton (a), i, 9-12; Tarbell (c), 67-68)

<sup>2</sup> The evidence as to his education is not clear. Miss Tarbell believes that all of the children in the little settlement where the Lincolns lived were taught to read, and were given as much additional instruction as was possible. Thomas' mother was an educated woman, and is thought to have taught him the elements of reading, writing, and ciphering. Documents have been discovered which prove that when he was a young man he wrote a good, legible hand. Dr. C. C. Graham, who claimed to have known Thomas and Nancy well and to have visited their home, said that Thomas could both read and write. But Abraham Lincoln once said that Thomas grew up "literally without education"; and a minister who was Thomas' pastor for several years in Illinois, and preached his funeral sermon, thought him "illiterate." The conclusion of one who had given the matter considerable attention is that Thomas was unlettered but not illiterate. (Tarbell (a), 233; (c), 68-69; Warren, (a), 45; Barton (a), i, 9; (b), 271; Nicolay & Hay, i, 596)

<sup>3</sup> To show that Mr. Lincoln had risen principally through his own efforts from very humble circumstances to the position he then held, was good campaign material. But instead of being born under such "unpromising circumstances" as are here portrayed, we now have every reason to believe that Abraham Lincoln came into what was, for that time and place, a better than usual rural home. Thomas then owned over 500 acres of land, and was a prosperous, energetic farmer. Being also a skilled carpenter, he had probably furnished their cabin in a way that made Nancy the envy of her neighbors. Dr. Graham, already mentioned as one of their friends, said that they had a cow and calf, milk and butter, a good feather bed, homewoven "kiverlids," big and little pots, a loom, and a wheel. Thomas was then paying taxes on two horses; and he doubtless had other stock, not then taxable. Their house was probably considerably larger than the one now enshrined in the beautiful memorial at Hodgenville, and it may have had a lean-to on the rear. Nor did either Abraham or his mother lack for attention at the time of his nativity. Margaret Walters, a local midwife, and two of Nancy's aunts, were there. (Warren, (a) 55, 91, 101-103, 188-191; Barton (a), i, 12; (b), 171-175, 342; (d), 81, 84; Tarbell (c), 233)

## LIFE OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN

education accessible to the poorer classes. The teachers were, for the most part, ignorant, uncultivated men, rough of speech, uncouth in manners, and rarely competent to teach beyond the simplest rudiments of learning—"Spelling, reading, writing," and sometimes a very little arithmetic. The books of study then in vogue, would not now be tolerated in schools of the lowest grade.<sup>1</sup> The school-house, constructed of logs, floorless, windowless, and without inclosure, was in admirable harmony with teacher, text books, and the mode of imparting instruction.

In his seventh year, Abraham was sent for short periods to two of these schools, and while attending them progressed so far as to learn to write. For this acquirement he manifested a great fondness. It was his custom to form letters, to write words and sentences wherever he found suitable material. He scrawled them with charcoal, he scored them in the dust, in the sand, in the snow—anywhere and everywhere that lines could be drawn, there he improved his capacity for writing.<sup>2</sup>

Meanwhile, the worldly condition of the elder Lincoln did not improve. He realized in his daily experience and observation how slavery oppresses the poorer classes, making their poverty and social disrepute a permanent condition through the degradation which it affixes to labor. Revolving this matter in his mind, he wisely resolved to remove his young family from its presence. Accordingly, in the autumn of 1816, he emigrated to Spencer County, Indiana—one of the States consecrated forever to freedom and free labor by the Jeffersonian Ordinance of 1787, and which, with the States now comprising the territory included in that memorable instrument, has afforded asylum—an open field and fair play—to thousands upon thou-

<sup>1</sup> Whether modern schoolbooks would, or would not, have been preferable, is perhaps a matter of opinion. This annotator has examined with some care duplicates of most of the books that young Lincoln is alleged to have studied, and they seem to him better suited for that environment than our modern works would have been.

Among the text-books that Lincoln is known to have studied, at various times, are: Dillworth's *Spelling Book*; Webster's *American Spelling Book*; Murray's *English Reader*; Lowe's *Columbian Class Book*; *The Kentucky Preceptor*; Scott's *Lessons in Elocution*; Kirkham's *Grammar*; Blair's *Rhetoric*; Pike's *Arithmetick*; Grimshaw's *History of the United States*; Day's *Algebra*; Omstead's *Astronomy*; Flint's *Geometry, Trigonometry, and Rectangular Surveying*; Gibson's *Surveying*; Simson's *Euclid*; and Neilson's *Exercises in Greek*. He is also known to have used Bailey's *Etymological Dictionary*, and both Webster's *Primary Dictionary* and Webster's *Unabridged Dictionary*. (Herndon, 37, 47-48; Barton (a), i, 120, 187; (b), 183-187; Weik, 22; Dodge, 6; Beveridge, i, 73, 75, 76, 518, 519; Lamon (a), 37; Tarbell (c), 177-179; Whitney (a), 49; Nicolay & Hay, i, 640-641; Robinson, 113; Arnold, 24; Rice, 467. Some of the identical books that Lincoln used are now preserved in collections of Lincolniana.)

A careful examination of these books is suggested to those who suppose them to be vastly inferior to modern texts.

<sup>2</sup> The most valuable and authentic work we now have regarding the parentage of Lincoln, and his Kentucky life, is probably *Lincoln's Parentage and Childhood* by Louis A. Warren. The statements that Dr. Warren makes are supported by over 1,500 documents, many of them court records, which he uncovered during a search of five years.

<sup>2</sup> The information on which are based the statements in this paragraph, and those in the immediately succeeding paragraphs of the Scripps work, must have been obtained from Mr. Lincoln; they certainly were read by him with great care before being published. They plainly indicate that he learned to read even so difficult a book as the Bible, and that he wrote readily, while he was still a child in Kentucky; that he had "skill as a penman" as early as when he arrived in Indiana. This agrees with his later statement to Mrs. Rankin, that his mother taught him to read the Bible when he was a child. If he could read the Bible, and act as "amanuensis for the neighborhood," as is stated in a succeeding paragraph, who can doubt that he was also reading about everything else that was available? His early ability to read and write is emphasized here because several important biographers, following Herndon—and for no other apparent reason—, have stated, in substance, that when Abraham reached Indiana he could no more than recognize some of the words in his elementary speller. So far from that being true, everything we know indicates that before he arrived in Indiana he had read many books. With an ambitious mother, and his own passion for learning, it would have been passing strange if he had done less. Many boys who afterwards never attained even local fame have done as much. (Rankin (b), 320; Brooks 6, Herndon, 32; Warren (a), 196)



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sands who have, in like manner, been driven from their homes by that great social scourge of the "poor whites" of the South.<sup>1</sup>

Young Lincoln was in his eighth year when the family removed to Indiana. They settled in an unbroken forest, gladly taking upon themselves all the privations and hardships of a pioneer life, in view of what they had left behind them. The erection of a house and the felling of the forest was the first work to be done. Abraham was young to engage in such labor, but he was large of his age, stalwart, and willing to work. An ax was at once placed in his hands, and from that time until he attained his twenty-third year, when not employed in labor on the farm, he was almost constantly wielding that most useful implement.

Upon the arrival of the family in Indiana, the friends who were left behind were to be written to. The elder Lincoln could do nothing more in the way of writing than to bunglingly sign his name. The mother, though a ready reader, had not been taught the accomplishment of writing. In this emergency Abraham's skill as a penman was put into requisition, and with highly satisfactory results. From that time onward he conducted the family correspondence. This fact soon becoming public, little Abraham was considered a marvel of learning and wisdom by the simple-minded settlers; and ever afterward, as long as he remained in Indiana, he was the letter-writer for the neighbors generally, as well as for his father's family. That he was selected for this purpose was doubtless owing not more to his proficiency in writing than to his ability to express the wishes and feelings of those for whom he wrote in clear and forcible language, and to that obliging disposition that has always distinguished him in subsequent life. It cannot be doubted that something of Mr. Lincoln's style and faculty of composition in later years, both as a writer and speaker, is to be traced back to these earlier efforts as an amanuensis for the neighborhood.<sup>2</sup>

In the autumn of 1818, Abraham, in the loss of his mother, experienced the first great sorrow of his life. Facts in the possession of the

<sup>1</sup> In the autobiographical sketch which he furnished Scripps, Mr. Lincoln said "This removal was partly on account of slavery, but chiefly on account of the difficulty in land titles in Kentucky." In 1860, the Abolitionists felt none too confident about Lincoln; and Scripps may have thought it "good politics" to emphasize slavery as a cause for the Lincoln migration. (Nicolay & Hay, i, 675)

Thomas Lincoln had trouble over the titles of three farms, all of which he purchased in good faith. When he came to sell the first one, it had shrunk thirty-eight acres, representing a loss to him of £18. When the title to the second proved defective, it was ordered that he receive back what he had paid; but he was unable to collect it. The third tract, the Knob Creek farm, was taken from him by a suit of ejectment. While the final decision had not been made when he left Kentucky, he seems to have despaired of saving it. All this litigation was expensive, and it probably consumed what he received for the farm that he sold. It is not surprising, therefore, that he decided to go over into Indiana, where the government had surveyed the land in square sections, and land titles were secure. (Warren (a), 120-122; Barton (a), i, 92; Tarbell (c), 111)

And Thomas appears to have suffered another misfortune. There is no direct or documentary evidence; but a number of biographers have recounted a tradition that he once started on a trading voyage to New Orleans which ended in a crushing loss to him. One story has his flat-boat sink before he even got started on his journey. Another story has him start down the river with a boat load of produce belonging to himself and his neighbors, and fall into the hands of "a pair of sharpers" who got away with the boat, leaving him nothing to do but return home and "face the music." What is probably a truer account has his boat capsized in the Ohio, with a loss to him of most of the cargo. While no one of these stories may be entirely accurate, we can scarcely doubt that Thomas started for New Orleans on a trading voyage; that, for some reason, he suffered disaster; and that instead of recouping the losses he had sustained because of defective land titles, he made a substantial addition to them. (Gridley, 61, 68; Tarbell (a) 233; Barton (b), 339)

<sup>2</sup> This very effectually disposes of the claim of the mendacious Dennis Hanks that he taught Abraham to read and write at a later period. On another occasion, however, Hanks admitted that Nancy Lincoln taught Abraham and his sister to read while they were children in Kentucky. (Lamon (a), 47; Beveridge, i, 31, 56)



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writer have impressed him with the belief that, although of but limited education, she was a woman of great native strength of intellect and force of character; and he suspects that those admirable qualities of head and heart which characterize her distinguished son are inherited mostly from her. She, as well as her husband, was a devout member of the Baptist Church. It was her custom on the Sabbath, when there was no religious worship in the neighborhood—a thing of frequent occurrence—to employ a portion of the day in reading the Scriptures aloud to her family. After Abraham and his sister had learned to read, they shared by turns in this duty of Sunday reading. This practice, continued faithfully through a series of years, could not fail to produce certain effects.<sup>1</sup> Among other things, its tendency was to impart an accurate acquaintance with Bible

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Lincoln's religious convictions and theological beliefs have received more attention, probably, than any other topic in *Lincolniana*. All shades of belief and disbelief have claimed him, sometimes with little more reason than the personal predilections of the claimants.

Most of the ministers with whom he came in contact as a boy in Kentucky and Indiana, perhaps all of them, were illiterate but opinionated. Dr. William E. Barton opines that while young Lincoln was in Indiana, and possibly while living at New Salem, he never listened to a Baptist preacher who would admit that the earth was round. However, several of the school books that he is known to have used taught elementary astronomy. Some of the English colonists who settled near his Indiana home were educated men holding liberal religious views. The leaders at New Harmony were extremely liberal. It seems probable, therefore, that unless he heard better-educated and more-enlightened ministers during his formative period than we have reason to think that he did, he mentally must have associated preachers and churches with ignorance, with intolerance, and with bigotry; and he must have associated a liberal religious view with the enlightenment, tolerance, and charity which he valued so highly throughout his entire life, (*Drake's Pioneer Life in Kentucky*; Murr's *Lincoln in Indiana*; Barton (a), ii, 459; (c), 33, 61-65)

In a letter to Mary Owens, written from Springfield in 1837, he said:

I've never been to church yet and I probably shall not be soon. I stay away because I am conscious I should not know how to behave myself. (Nicolay & Hay, i, 16)

In 1850, Mrs. Lincoln became a member of the Presbyterian Church at Springfield, and Mr. Lincoln rented a pew. After that, he often accompanied her to both Sunday and week-day services. Later, at Washington, he attended with her quite regularly. Hon. Henry C. Deming claimed that during the war Lincoln said:

I have never united with any church because I find difficulty in giving assent, without mental reservation, to the long complicated statements of Christian doctrine which characterize their Articles of Belief and Confessions of Faith. When any church will inscribe over its altar, as its sole qualification for membership, the Saviour's condensed statement of the substance of both Law and Gospel, "Thou shall love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself," that church will I join with all my heart and all my soul. (*Deming's Eulogy Before the General Assembly of Connecticut, 1865*; Rankin (b), 326)

Few have read Mr. Lincoln's addresses and state papers without noticing how seldom he used Biblical quotations and references to Deity before 1861, and how much use he made of them later. A student of *Lincolniana*, when asked to account for this fact, in view of his own conviction that Mr. Lincoln did not materially change his beliefs after his election, gave these as the probable reasons:

(1) *The immensity of the problems that Lincoln faced when President, and a realization of his own responsibility "drove him to his knees,"* as he once expressed it. We know that he later expressed at many times the central idea of the short farewell address that he made when leaving Springfield for Washington: "Without the assistance of that Divine Being \* \* \* I cannot succeed. With that assistance, I cannot fail."

(2) *The influence of certain members of his cabinet.* It was at the suggestion of Secretary Chase, for instance, that he added to the Emancipation Proclamation that paragraph in which he invoked "the gracious favor of Almighty God." The influence of Secretary Seward and his Book of Common Prayer is plainly seen in many of the proclamations which were countersigned by that Secretary.

(3) *The effect upon a great body of people to whom such references gave more confidence and zeal than did arguments.* Mr. Lincoln was extremely practical. He once indicated with biting sarcasm his disapproval of voting "on principle" when doing so could lead to no immediate or ultimate political advantage. When Union was at stake, he felt justified in treating slavery (much as he hated it, and wrong as he believed it to be) in any way that would help the cause of Union. When the fate of the Thirteenth Amendment hung in the balance, he authorized Charles A. Dana to promise three Democrat Congressmen anything they might demand in return for their votes. He had once lost a nomination for Congress partially because he was suspected of being a Deist, and his taking what proved to be the right position regarding slavery, in 1860, had brought to him the support of only three of the twenty-three preachers at Springfield. He may have believed that his duty to his country demanded that he make a

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history and Bible teachings; and it must also have been largely instrumental in developing the religious element in the character of the younger members of the family. The facts correspond with this hypothesis. There are few men in public life so familiar with the Scriptures as Mr. Lincoln, while to those pious labors of his mother in his early childhood are doubtless to be attributed much of that purity of life, that elevation of moral character, that exquisite sense of justice, and that sentiment of humanity which now form distinguished traits of his character. A year after the death of his mother, his father married Mrs. Sally Johnston, at Elizabethtown, Kentucky, a widow with three children.<sup>1</sup> She proved a good and kind mother to Abraham. She survives her husband, and is now living in Coles County, Illinois.

After the removal of the family to Indiana, Abraham attended school a little, chiefly in the winter, when work was less pressing; but the aggregate of all the time thus spent, both in Kentucky and Indiana, did not amount to one year. He is therefore indebted to schools for but a very small part of his education. All men who become in any respect distinguished, are, in one sense at least, self-made; that is to say, the development and the discipline of the intellect can only be secured by self-effort. Without this, assistance on the part of teachers, however long and continuously offered, will yield no fruit. With it, assistance is valuable mainly in that it directs and encourages effort. He is said to be a self-made man who attains to distinction without having enjoyed the advantages of teachers and of institutions of learning; and in this sense Abraham Lincoln is peculiarly entitled to the appellation. His early teachers were men of scarcely any learning,

somewhat ostentatious display of his religious sentiments if he could thereby secure for the government the support of a large number of religionists.

During the war, Mr. Lincoln seems to have believed that all who were taking part in the contest, including himself, were instruments working out the Divine will. In reply to an address, he expressed the following sentiments:

In the very responsible position in which I happen to be placed, being a humble instrument in the hands of our Heavenly Father, as I am, and as we all are, to work out his great purposes, I have desired that all my works and acts may be according to his will \* \* \*. (Nicolay & Hay, ii, 243)

In an article about Mr. Lincoln's faith, published in *The Outlook* in 1906, Dr. Lyman Abbott said:

There is no evidence that Mr. Lincoln had become a gnostic, or that he had a comprehensive scheme of the universe, or that he had either wrought out a system of theology for himself or accepted any that had been wrought out by others; but there is abundant evidence that he had learned in the four years of tragedy a lesson of dependence and trust, that he had insensibly put together his belief in a supreme Power and his faith in righteousness, and that thus there had been born in him faith in a supreme righteous Power, whose will we may help to carry out, and on whose wisdom and strength we may rely in achieving it. It is thus that the life of Abraham Lincoln illustrates both how a reverent agnostic may be deeply religious and how the life of service and self sacrifice leads through doubt to faith.

<sup>1</sup> In her first matrimonial venture, Sarah Bush Johnson had, in the expressive metaphor of that day, "drove her ducks to a poor market." The records show that Johnson was never assessed on any property except one horse, and that he was once placed on the delinquent list for not paying his poll tax. Two of Sarah's brothers had to pay notes which they indorsed for him, he being reported "without funds." It has been noted that when he was appointed jailor these same brothers carefully refrained from signing his bond. Johnson died in 1816, and for the next three years, Sarah struggled along, an "honest poor widow." It is not surprising, therefore, that when Thomas appeared, told of the need that he and his children had for her, and proposed marriage, she stood not upon the order of her accepting, but said "yes" at once. Her only objection to leaving Elizabethtown was overcome when Thomas paid some small debts which she had been unable to meet. Upon her arrival in Indiana, she took the desolate Lincoln children to her heart, and she thereby gained their life-long gratitude. Although she and her children were illiterate, she encouraged Abraham in his studies, and helped him to prosecute them. Whatever we may think of the later conduct of her family toward the Lincolns, no one will quarrel with Dr. Warren for calling her "the greatest stepmother in all the world." (Warren (b), 82-88; Barton (a), i, 117, 139; Tarbell (b), i, 32; (c), 129; Herndon, 29)



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and what he mastered through their assistance consisted only of the simplest rudiments of education. That subsequent training and disciplining of the intellect, that habit of close investigation, that power of intense thought, which enable him to master every subject he investigates, and that faculty of clear and forcible expression, of logical arrangement, and of overwhelming argument, by which he enforces his own well-grounded convictions—all this is the result of his own unaided exertions, and of a naturally sound and vigorous understanding. So far from being indebted to institutions of learning for any of the qualities which characterize him, he was never in a college or an academy as a student, and was never, in fact, inside of a college or academy building until after he had commenced the practice of the law. He studied English grammar after he was twenty-three years of age; at twenty-five he mastered enough of geometry, trigonometry, and mensuration to enable him to take the field as a surveyor; and he studied the six books of Euclid after he had served a term in Congress, and when he was forty years of age, amid the pressure of an extensive legal practice, and of frequent demands upon his time by the public.

Books were another means of education which young Lincoln did not neglect; but in a backwoods settlement of Indiana, forty years ago, books were somewhat rarer than now.<sup>1</sup> They had this advantage, however, over

<sup>1</sup> Books were probably not so plentiful then as they are today, but we now have every reason to believe that the number of those which young Lincoln could read were ample for the time that he could devote to study. He once told Leonard Swett that while he was a boy in Indiana he "borrowed and read every book he could hear of for fifty miles around." While that statement need not be taken too literally, it indicates that he made good use of the resources that were available. (Swett, in Rice, 71)

After Thomas Lincoln's second marriage, he had a family of eight, and many "hangers on," for whom to provide. With so many mouths to feed, it was necessary that the Lincolns secure outside employment; and Abraham was hired out to work for the neighbors whenever possible. (Warren (b), 85; Murr, 31; Tarbell (c), 131; Beveridge, 59-65)

His work among the neighbors gave Abraham an opportunity to find out what books were had, read some of them while employed, and borrow others when he went home. William Wood lent him books, and encouraged him to write essays. David Turnham let him read the *Revised Statutes of Indiana* and Scott's *Lessons in Elocution*. At Josiah Crawford's home, he found a *Kentucky Preceptor*, Ramsey's *Washington*, and other books. Judge John Pitcher of Rockport, the leading lawyer of the county, lent him books and advised him regarding his studies. It is claimed that he was often a welcome guest in the home of Judge John A. Brackenridge of Booneville; that he made free use of the judge's 450 volume library; and that it was there he first learned to appreciate Shakespeare, Burns, and Byron. (Herndon, 45-68; Beveridge, i, 65-92; Tarbell (c), 139-153; Iglehart (a), 166; Ind. His. Com. *Bulletin*, No. 16, p. 63)

Mr. Lincoln's early biographers, especially Herndon, secured much valuable and illuminating information about the daily life of their subject as it related to his unlettered friends and neighbors of the Little Pigeon Creek settlement. No early biographer, however, seems to have heard about, or to have known of, what were probably two of the most important factors in his intellectual development—The English Colonists and The New Harmony Social Experiment.

In the second decade of the Nineteenth Century, after numerous wars, agriculture in Great Britain was much depressed, rents and taxes were onerous, political conditions unsatisfactory, and religious persecutions rife. A large number of well-to-do farmers migrated to the United States, often forming colonies. In 1817 and 1818, the Hornbrooks and others started a colony about ten miles north of Evansville, and only about thirty-five miles from the Lincoln farm. Within two years, the settlement contained over one hundred families, representing several hundred people. These settlers, generally, were educated, moral, industrious, and friendly. Many had brought their libraries with them. The Evansville *Gazette*, which Abraham probably read, told much about the activities of the colonists, and discussed their ambitions and plans. Some of them occasionally had business at Booneville, where Abraham often attended court. Always an eager gatherer of facts, he would not fail on such occasions to secure every bit of information possible regarding the former homes of these colonists; their political, social, and religious beliefs; and, particularly, what books they had brought with them. Judge Iglehart, the leading local historian, is confident that young Lincoln did not neglect this opportunity to secure the use of many interesting books which before had not been available to him. (Iglehart (a), 162; (b), 92-96, 98, 140-144; Murr, 154; Weik, 131; Tarbell (c), 139-153)

In 1804, George Rapp, founder of a German religious sect known as Rappites, established a colony in Pennsylvania. In 1815, this colony was moved to a new location on the Indiana side of the Wabash River, about fifty miles from its mouth. German thrift, industry, and good management, made a success of the experiment; the community prospered. They decided, however, to return to Pennsylvania. Robert Owen, a wealthy Scotch manufacturer and philanthropist, bought

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a majority of the books of the present time: the few that were to be had possessed solid merit, and well repaid the time and labor given to their study. Abraham's first book, after Dilworth's Spelling-Book, was, as has been stated, the Bible. Next to that came Æsop's Fables, which he read with great zest, and so often as to commit the whole to memory. After that he obtained a copy of Pilgrim's Progress—a book which, perhaps, has quickened as many dormant intellects and started into vigorous growth the religious element of as many natures, as any other in the English language. Then came the Life of Franklin, Weems' Washington,<sup>1</sup> and Riley's Narrative.<sup>2</sup> Over the two former the boy lingered with rapt delight. He followed Washington and brave Ben. Franklin through their early trials and struggles as well as through their later triumphs; and even then, in the midst of his cramped surroundings, and in the face of the discouragements which beset him on every hand, his soul was lifted upwards, and noble aspirations which never afterwards forsook him, grew up within him, and great thoughts stirred his bosom—thoughts of emancipated nations, of the glorious principles which lie at the foundation of human freedom, and of honorable fame acquired by heroic endeavors to enforce and maintain them. These books constituted the boy's library. When he was fourteen or fifteen years of age, he learned that one Mr. Crawford, a distant neighbor, had in his house Ramsey's Life of Washington—a book which he was told gave a fuller and better account of Washington and the Revolution than the volume he had read with so much pleasure. He at once borrowed the book, and devoured its contents. By some accident the volume was exposed to a shower and badly damaged. Young Lincoln had no money,

their 20,000 acres of land, their factories, and houses. The sale was completed in the spring of 1825. Owen secured the cooperation of William Maclure, a wealthy Scotch scientist of Philadelphia. Maclure invested \$150,000 in stock and loans, and took charge of the educational features of the experiment. He had already completed a geological survey of the United States, thereby gaining the title of "Father of American Geology"; and he had visited Pestalozzi's school in Switzerland. Maclure determined to make New Harmony the Center of American Education; and to do that, he brought there the most distinguished coterie of scientists and educators that had yet been assembled in America. In January, 1826, Robert Dale Owen arrived, bringing with him additional educators, new printing presses, and a splendid library. A newspaper was started at New Harmony, and a school founded. Through this paper, the *New Harmony Gazette*; papers published at Princeton, Evansville, Louisville, and Corydon; the agents of the society; and discussions wherever men met, young Lincoln secured a wealth of thought-provoking ideas. It is said that for a time scarcely anything else was talked about in his neighborhood. We are told that he longed to attend the New Harmony school; but whether he ever went there, or used the library, is not recorded. It would be rather remarkable if he did not; we know that he sometimes went to Princeton, only twenty miles nearer his home. In any event, there can be little doubt that a powerful influence was exerted upon him by the New Harmony experiment. (Lockwood, 22-277; Atkinson, 31; Iglehart (a) 167-168)

<sup>1</sup> While addressing the Senate of the State of New Jersey in February, 1861, Mr. Lincoln said:

May I be pardoned if upon this occasion I mention that away back in my childhood, the earliest days of my being able to read, I got hold of a small book, such a one as few of the younger members have ever seen,—Weems' "Life of Washington."

He clearly said there that he had read the Weems book during the *earliest days of his being able to read*. If he had been taught to read books, including the Bible, by his mother (who died when he was nine years old), as he told Mrs. Rankin; and if he had progressed so far in his "seventh year" as "to write words and sentences," as stated on pages one and two of the Scripps "Life," his last years in Kentucky must have been "the earliest days" of his "being able to read," not those in Indiana when he was "about eleven or twelve years of age," as was recently stated. This annotator believes that Lincoln read the Weems work while he was a child in Kentucky, during "the earliest days" of his "being able to read"; that no evidence has yet been uncovered to show from whom he secured the book; and that biographers who say that he got it from Andrew Crawford in Indiana are as mistaken as are those who say it was the Weems book he borrowed from Josiah Crawford, when he was several years older. (Nicolay & Hay, i, 688; Rankin (b), 320; Scripps, 1-2; *Lincoln Love*, No. 60)

<sup>2</sup> *An Authentic Narrative of the Loss of the Brig Commerce*, by James Riley, is said to have been one of the most popular books to be found in the pioneer homes of southwestern Indiana. In it are related the adventures which a sea captain experienced after his ship had been wrecked on the coast of Africa.



but he knew how to work. He went to Crawford, told him what had happened, and expressed his readiness to work out the full value of the book. Crawford had a field of corn, which had been stripped of the blades as high as the ear, preparatory to cutting off the tops for winter fodder for his cattle. He expressed his willingness to square accounts if Lincoln would cut the tops from that field of corn. The offer was promptly accepted, and with three days of hard labor the book was paid for, and Young Lincoln returned home the proud possessor of another volume.<sup>1</sup> Not long after this incident, he was fortunate enough to get possession of a copy of Plutarch's *Lives*.<sup>2</sup> What fields of thought its perusal opened up to the stripling, what hopes were excited in his youthful breast, what worthy models of probity, of justice, of honor, and of devotion to great principles he resolved to pattern after, can be readily imagined by those who are familiar with his subsequent career, and who have themselves lingered over the same charmed page.

Listening occasionally to the early backwoods preachers, was another means which, more than schools, and, perhaps, quite as much as books, aided in developing and forming the character of young Lincoln. It has already been stated that his parents were pious members of the Baptist Church.<sup>3</sup> Among the backwoodsmen of Indiana, at that period, sectarianism did not run as high as it probably does in the same section now. The people were glad of an opportunity to hear a sermon, whether delivered by one of their own religious faith or not. Thus it was at least with the father and mother of young Lincoln, who never failed to attend, with their family, upon religious worship, whenever held within reasonable distance. They gladly received the word, caring less for the doctrinal tenets of the preacher than for the earnestness and zeal with which he enforced practical godliness. No class of men are more deserving of admiration than those who

<sup>1</sup> With the exception of Thomas Lincoln, probably no man connected with the boyhood of Lincoln has received so much unmerited abuse as Josiah Crawford. Crawford gave employment to Thomas, Abraham, and Sarah; and he paid them fair wages for what they did. Everything we know about him indicates that he was the kind of a man that Abraham needed as an employer. Murr tells us that Crawford was a useful citizen, and that he acted as physician and dentist to his neighbors. He was honest and just, and appears to have taken a real interest in the boy. When he required Abraham to top corn at fair wages to pay for the book that had got damaged, he may have been more concerned in giving his young neighbor a lesson concerning one's duty in the care of borrowed property than in recovering the value of the book. Possibly Abraham believed at one time that he had cause for resentment; but when older, he no doubt had a better understanding of his employer's motives. It has been noted that when Mr. Lincoln returned to the Gentryville neighborhood on a speaking tour, in 1844, he was entertained at the Crawford home. The elder man watched the career of his younger friend with much interest. Crawford's grandson once told Miss Tarbell that the news of the assassination of Lincoln so shocked Crawford, then an aged grandfather, that he never entirely recovered. (Murr, 166, 338; Hobson, 36-37; Tarbell (c), 132-133, 141)

<sup>2</sup> In a letter written to William H. Herndon in 1865, a copy of which was furnished to Mrs. Dyche by Jesse W. Weik, Scripps said that when his biography of Lincoln was published he was doubtful about the accuracy of only one statement—that Lincoln had read Plutarch's *Lives*. He supposed that Lincoln had read it when a boy because most boys at that time did read the work. He wrote Mr. Lincoln that if he had been wrong in his supposition he wished Lincoln to get a copy at once and read it, that he "might be able to testify as to the perfect accuracy of the entire sketch." Scripps did not receive a reply to his letter, but he afterward heard that Lincoln made "frequent humorous allusions to it." A variant of this story, also told on the authority of Mr. Weik, can be found in Miss Tarbell's *Early Life of Abraham Lincoln*. (*Journal*, Ill. Sta. His. Soc., Oct. 1924, p. 348; Tarbell (a), 71)

<sup>3</sup> In Kentucky, Thomas and Nancy Lincoln belonged to the Little Mount Church, a Separate Baptist organization. The Separate Baptists opposed all creeds—the Bible was their creed. They even refused to have rules of order and decorum written. In Indiana, Thomas and Sarah were influential members of the Little Pigeon Creek Baptist Church. At their final home in Illinois, where a congregation of their own faith was not available to them, they joined the Christian, sometimes called "Campbellite," Church, an organization similar to their own in that it has no written creed. (Warren (a), 223, 234, 243; (b), 87; Barton (a), i, 105, 127-129; (c), 37; Herndon, 11-12)

have been the first to carry the gospel to our frontier settlements. If ever men have labored in the cause of their Divine Master and for the salvation of their fellow-mortals, impelled by motives entirely free from any dross of selfishness, surely that honor should be awarded to them. Many of these early pioneer preachers were gifted with a rare eloquence. Inspired always with the grandeur of their theme, communing daily with nature while on their long and solitary journeys from settlement to settlement, they seemed to be favored, beyond human wont, with a very near approach to the source of all inspiration; and coming with this preparation before an audience of simple-minded settlers, preacher and people freed from conventional restraint, these men almost always moved the hearts and wrought upon the imagination of their hearers as only those gifted with the truest eloquence can. Of course the immediate result of such preaching was to awaken the religious element, rather than to inform the understanding as to doctrines and dogmas—to lead to spiritual exaltation and religious fervor, rather than a clear knowledge and appreciation of those points of theological controversy which for so many centuries have engaged the attention of disputatious divines. It is not intended to decide which of the two methods is the better calculated to evangelize the world. But as to the great value of the preaching here spoken of, and its singular adaptation to the people to whom it was addressed, there can be but one opinion. That it exerted a marked influence upon the character of young Lincoln, that it thoroughly awakened the religious element within him, and that his subsequent life has been greatly influenced by it, are facts which the writer desires to place upon record for the encouragement of other laborers in the same field, and as a distinct recognition of the further fact that there can be no true and lasting greatness unless its foundation be laid in the truths of the Bible.

And thus young Lincoln grew to manhood, constantly engaged in the various kinds of labor incident to the country and the times—felling the forest, clearing the ground of the undergrowth and of logs, splitting rails, pulling the cross-cut and the whip-saw, driving the frower, plowing, harrowing, planting, hoeing, harvesting, assisting at house-raisings, log-rollings and corn-huskings; mingling cordially with the simple-minded, honest people with whom his lot was cast, developing a kindly nature, and evincing social qualities which rendered his companionship desirable; remarkable even then for a wonderful gift of relating anecdotes, and for a talent of interspersing them with acute and apt reflections; everywhere a favorite, always simple, genial, truthful, and unpretending, and always chosen umpire on occasions calling for the exercise of sound judgment and inflexible impartiality. It is scarcely necessary to add that he also greatly excelled in all those homely feats of strength, agility, and endurance, practiced by frontier people in his sphere of life. In wrestling, jumping, running, throwing the maul and pitching the crow-bar, he always stood first among those of his own age. As in height he loomed above all his associates, so in these customary pastimes he as far surpassed his youthful competitors, and even when pitted against those of maturer years, he was almost always victo-



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rious.<sup>1</sup> In such daily companionship, he grew up in full sympathy with the people, rejoicing in their simple joys and pleasures, sorrowing in their trials and misfortunes, and united to them all by that bond of brotherhood among the honest poor—a common heritage of labor.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> He was a young giant; at seventeen, he had attained six feet and four inches in height. Toil, clean living, and plain fare developed in him to a superlative degree the potential strength he had inherited from his forefathers. It is claimed that after he reached his full physical powers he once lifted a box of stones weighing over 1,000 pounds. To the end of his life, he was proud of this superior bodily strength. On at least two occasions during the Civil War, he displayed his ability to hold an ax in a horizontal position, with his arm extended, by grasping the extreme end of the handle. No one who saw him do this was able to duplicate the performance. Many believe that but for the physical powers that he inherited and acquired he could not have endured the stress and strain he went through while President. (Herndon, 61-62, 125; Lamon (a), 52, 154; Rice, 71; Rothschild (b), 8-33; Chittenden, 316)

<sup>2</sup> As a product of Southwestern Indiana, Lincoln was unique only in the height of the eminence he attained. Among others who graduated into life from that section were John Hay, Joaquin Miller, Lew Wallace, Joseph Lane, Walter Q. Gresham, and Generals Harrison, Hovey, Burnside, and Rosecrans. (Murr, 17)

Much of young Lincoln's daily life was spent in contact with rough and illiterate people, and he received little schooling; but he was an omnivorous reader and a hard student. The small libraries of his neighbors; and the larger ones of Pitcher, Brackenridge, and the English colonists, gave him access to the best philosophical, political, and poetic literature then extant. New Harmony opened up to him a whole world of science, and the most advanced ideas in education, ethics, and government. At no other place in the United States, probably, could he have secured, during his formative years, the benefits of pioneer life, and, at the same time, have lived under the influence of so much culture. Given his analytical mind, retentive memory, and passion for study, we should expect an individual, when placed under such circumstances, to develop into just what he became.

There immediately occurs to one the objection that Lincoln never mentioned having utilized such superior advantages while living in Indiana. Mr. Lincoln was unreliable on just one subject—his own worth and accomplishments. Whether from modesty, vanity, political policy, or because of an inferiority complex, we may never know; but he rarely said anything that might redound to his own credit; and he unfaithfully disparaged his past opportunities, his attainments, and himself. He once wrote that in Indiana "There was absolutely nothing to excite ambition for education," but his associates all reported him to have been a passionate student while there; he repeatedly stated that his education was "defective," but he produced some of the gems of English literature; he said, "The world will little note nor long remember what we say here," but we do not doubt that his Gettysburg address will be remembered and repeated as long as our language endures; he declared he was "not fit to be President," but the wisest now marvel at the genius of his statesmanship. That he never told of the advantages he enjoyed while he was a boy in Indiana is no evidence that such advantages did not exist.

In a chapter entitled "Lincoln's Intellectual Awakening," Miss Tarbell sums up the influences which affected young Lincoln in Indiana with an insight that no other prominent biographer has shown. (Tarbell (c), 139-153)

## CHAPTER II.

### REMOVAL TO ILLINOIS.

Illinois in 1829—Explorers in the Northern and Middle Portion of the State—Character of the Country—Remarkable Influx of Population—Removal of the Lincoln Family—Their Mode of Travel—Founding another Home—Building a Log Cabin and making Rails—Symbols.

From 1829 until the financial revulsion of 1837-40, a vast flood of immigration poured into Illinois. At the first-named date, the population of the State was only about 150,000—a number scarcely equal to the present population of the city of Chicago. This population was confined mostly to the southern part of the State. There were comparatively few people north of Alton, and these, as is always the case in the settlement of a new country, were scattered along the rivers and smaller water-courses. And even south of Alton, in the older-settled portion of the State, most of the population still clung either to the water-courses or close to the edges of the timberland. The large prairies, with the exception of a narrow belt along the fringes of timber, were wholly uncultivated and without population. Indeed, at that time, and for many years after, it was the opinion of even the most intelligent people, that the larger prairies of Illinois would never be used for any other purpose than as a common pasturage for the cattle of adjacent settlers. It is only of later years, and since the introduction of railroads, that the true value and destiny of these prairies have come to be understood and appreciated. Thus, in 1829, only an infinitesimal portion of the better part of Illinois was occupied. At the same time, the people of the other States entertained very imperfect notions of the character of the country and of its wonderful natural resources. The first settlement by an indigenous American population had been the result of the accounts carried back to the old States by the soldiers who accompanied the gallant George Rogers Clark in that memorable expedition in 1778, which resulted in the conquest of Kaskaskia, Cahokia, and Vincennes. Another impetus was given in the same direction after the war of 1812, by similar reports of the beauty and fertility of the country taken back by rangers and other troops who had done service in the then territory of Illinois. But from that time until the year 1829, the increase of population by immigration had been very slow. The era of financial prosperity which terminated in the memorable financial break-down of 1837-40, gave another impulse to western immigration. The Anglo-Saxon greed for land was stimulated to unusual activity by the abundance of money, and explorers started out in search of new and desirable countries. Entering Illinois by the great lines of travel—at Vincennes, at Terre Haute, at Paducah, at Shawneetown, and journeying westward and northward, these explorers were struck with the wonderful beauty and fertility of the country, and the ease with which it could be reduced to immediate cultivation. Its rich, undulating prairies, its vast natural pasturage for cattle, the accessibility to navigable water-courses, the salubrity of its climate, and, above all, its millions of acres of government land, conspired to render it peculiarly attractive to men who had been accustomed all their lives to mountainous and rocky districts, or to a country covered with heavy forests. Other explorers, entering the State

from the direction of the great Northwestern Lakes, and traversing it southward and westward to the Mississippi, saw at every stage of their journey, a country no less fertile and inviting, the sylvan beauty of which no pen or pencil could adequately portray. The reports spread by these travelers, on their return to the older States, regarding the wonderful region they had seen, together with occasional letters contributed to leading journals by delighted and enthusiastic tourists, awakened a spirit of emigration the like of which the country had never before witnessed. The stream of population that set at once Illinoisward continued, from this and other causes, to grow constantly broader and deeper—coming in from the South, setting westward from the belt of Middle States, pouring in by way of the Northwestern Lakes—dotting every prairie with new homes, opening thousands of farms, making roads, building bridges, founding schools, churches, villages, and cities—until the crash of 1837 came suddenly and unexpectedly upon the country, putting an immediate and effectual check upon the human movement.

Among those who heard the earliest reports concerning this land of promise, were the Lincoln family, in their quiet home in Indiana,<sup>1</sup> and they resolved to try their fortunes in it. Accordingly, on the first day of March, 1830, Abraham having just completed his twenty-first year, his father and family, together with the families of the two daughters and sons-in-law of his step-mother, bidding adieu to the old homestead in Indiana, turned their faces towards Illinois.<sup>2</sup> In those days, when people changed their residence from one State or settlement to another, they took all their movable possessions with them—their household goods, their kitchen utensils, including provisions for the journey, their farming implements, their horses and cattle. The former were loaded into wagons drawn, for the most part, by oxen, and the latter were driven by the smaller boys of the family, who were sometimes assisted by their sisters and mother. Thus arranged for a journey of weeks,—not unfrequently of months,—the emigrant set out, thinking but little of the hardships before him—of bad roads, of unbridged streams, of disagreeable weather, of sleeping on the ground or in the wagon, of sickness, accidents, and, sometimes, death, by the way—dwelling chiefly in thought upon the novelty and excitement of the trip, the rumored attractions of the new country whither he was going, and of the probable advantages likely to result from the change. By stages of ten or fifteen miles per day, over untraveled roads, now across mountains, swamps, and water-courses, and now through dense, umbrageous forests, and across broad prairies where the horizon alone bounded the vision, the caravan of wagons, men, women, and children, flocks and herds,

<sup>1</sup> In 1828, John Hanks, who appears to have been the flower of the flock, moved from the Gentryville, Indiana, settlement to a farm near Decatur, Illinois, in what was known as the Sangamo Country. He sent back glowing reports regarding the fertility of the Illinois country, and its opportunities; and urged his relatives to join him there. Dennis Hanks visited John in 1829, and returned home an enthusiastic advocate of making the change. By that time, it was evident to all that little could be hoped for from the sterile soil of Spencer County. A recurrence among their stock of the "trembles," with its attendant danger to themselves of "milk sickness," the disease of which Nancy Lincoln died, was decisive. (Barton (a), i, 138; Tarbell (c), 154; Herndon, 66-67)

<sup>2</sup> When she married Thomas Lincoln, Sarah Bush Johnson had two daughters and one son. The daughters married Dennis Hanks and Squire Hall, but remained in the home of Thomas Lincoln. Five grandchildren had arrived before Thomas removed to Illinois; so he then had a family of thirteen people, with himself and Abraham the only ones not of the Johnson-Hanks-Hall contingent. The party used "three covered wagons, two drawn by oxen, and one by horses, and two saddle horses." (Nicolay & Hay, i, 640; Barton (a), i, 139; Weik, 48; Lincoln Lore, No. 40)



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toiled onward by day, sleeping under the broad canopy of stars by night, patiently accomplishing the destined journey, sometimes of weeks'—sometimes of months'—duration.

It was by this primitive and laborious method that the Lincoln family made the journey from Spencer county, Indiana, to Macon county, Illinois—Abraham himself driving one of the ox-teams. He had now arrived at manhood, and both by law and by universal custom, was at liberty to begin the world for himself. But he was the only son of his father, now advanced in years and it was not in his nature to desert his aged sire at a time when all the hardships, privation, and toil of making a new home in a new country, were about to be entered upon. Whatever the future may have seemed to hold in it as a reward for effort specially directed to that end, he cheerfully put aside in obedience to his sense of duty, and engaged at once and heartily in the work before him. That summer's labor consisted, mainly, in building a log house, into which the family moved, making rails for, and fencing in ten acres of prairie, breaking the sod, and raising upon it a crop of corn.<sup>1</sup> This farm was situated on the north side of the Sangamon river, at the junction of the timber land and prairie, and about ten miles west of Decatur. The rails used in fencing in the ten-acre field are those of which so much, of late, has been said in the newspapers. Their existence was brought to the public attention during the sitting of the Republican State Convention, at Decatur, on the 9th of May last, on which occasion a banner attached to two of these rails, and bearing an appropriate inscription, was brought into the assemblage, and formally presented to that body, amid a scene of unparalleled enthusiasm. Since then, they have been in great demand in every State of the Union in which free labor is honored, where they have been borne in processions of the people, and hailed by hundreds of thousands of freemen as a symbol of triumph, and as a glorious vindication of freedom, and of the rights and the dignity of free labor.<sup>2</sup> These, however, were far from being the first or only rails made by young Lincoln. He was a practiced hand at the business. His first lessons had been taken while yet a boy in Indiana. Some of the rails made by him in that State have been clearly identified, and are now eagerly sought after. The writer has seen a cane, now in the possession of Mr. Lincoln, made since his nomination by one of his old Indiana acquaintances, from one of those rails split by his own hands in boyhood.

<sup>1</sup> In the autobiography which Lincoln wrote for Scripps, he said that while Thomas was building the new home "the sons-in-law were temporarily settled in other places in the county." After John Hanks, probably for a substantial consideration, and Abraham, for love and affection, got Thomas comfortably housed, these sons-in-law and their families returned home for the hard winter that followed. (Nicolay & Hay, i, 640; Atkinson, 11, 45; Herndon, 70)

After the death of President Lincoln in 1865, the cabin mentioned above was secured by members of the Hanks family, and exhibited—"Admission, 25c; Children, 10c"—at both Chicago and Boston. Later, it was sold to an English company to be exhibited in Europe, but was lost at sea. These facts were recently brought out through the researches of Dr. William E. Barton and the late Hon. Joseph B. Oakleaf.

<sup>2</sup> During the campaign of 1860, John Hanks did a thriving business shipping rails to all parts of the United States. That is what Mr. Lincoln referred to when he spoke of Hanks as "the same John Hanks who now engineers the 'rail enterprise' at Decatur \* \* \*." (Nicolay & Hay, i, 641)

## CHAPTER III.

### FLAT-BOATMAN—CLERK—INDIAN FIGHTER.

Flat-Boats and Flat Boatmen—A Commercial Revolution—The Deep Snow—Lincoln engages to take a Flat-Boat to New Orleans—Incident of his first Trip—First entrance into Sangamon County—Builds a Boat, and goes to New Orleans—Takes Charge of a Store and Mill at New Salem—Primitive Customs—Personal Popularity—The Black Hawk War—Volunteers—Elected Captain—Volunteers a Second and Third Time—The War Ended—Return Home.

Those who have come into Illinois since steamboats became numerous on the Western waters, and since the introduction of railroads, and the opening of the Illinois and Michigan Canal, have no correct idea how small an amount of business was transacted in the State so late as 1830, or of the great commercial revolution which has taken place since that time. At the period named there was but little inducement for growing surplus productions. The merchants of the country did not deal in corn, wheat, flour, beef, pork, lard, butter, or any of the great staples of the State. Beyond the purchase of a few furs and peltries, small quantities of feathers, beeswax, and tallow, the merchant rarely engaged in barter. The old United States Bank was then in existence, and through it the exchanges of the country were conducted at a rate so satisfactory that no Western merchant thought of shipping the products of the country to liquidate his Eastern balances. He bought his goods for cash, or on credit, and collected his debts, if so fortunate as to collect at all, in the same commodity, and never paid any of it out again, except for goods. The dependence of the country for money was chiefly upon that brought in by new settlers. Occasionally an adventurer appeared who paid out money for sufficient of the products of the country to load a flat-boat, which he floated off to find a market. Sometimes the more enterprising of the farmers, finding no market at home for the surplus of their farms, loaded a flat-boat on their own account, and by this means some money found its way into the country. Within the last twenty years this order of things has entirely changed, and at the present time every description of surplus product meets a ready cash market at home. While the old order lasted, however, the business of shipping by flat-boat was maintained on all the Western rivers, though the multiplication and competition of steamboats rendered the number less every year. The business itself was one of exposure, of hard labor, and of constant peril. It developed and nurtured a race of men peculiar for courage, herculean strength, hardihood, and great contempt of danger. Western annals abound in stories of these men. As a class they have become extinct, and the world will never see their like again; but their memory remains, and will constitute a part of the country's history, and mingle with our national romance forever. This much it seemed necessary to say for the benefit of the uninitiated reader, by way of preface to some account of young Lincoln's experiences as a flat-boatman. Going back then to the new home on the Sangamon River, we take up again the thread of the narrative.

The winter of 1830-31 is memorable to this day among the early settlers of Illinois, by reason of the deep snow which fell about the last of December, and which continued upon the ground for more than two

months.<sup>1</sup> It was a season of unusual severity, both upon the settlers and their stock. Many of the latter perished from exposure to the cold and from hunger, while the former, especially the more recently arrived of their number, were often put to great straits to obtain provisions. Of these hardships the Lincolns and their immediate neighbors had their full share, and but for Abraham, whose vigor of constitution and remarkable power of endurance fitted him for long and wearisome journeys in search of provisions, their suffering would have been often greater.<sup>2</sup>

Some time during the winter, one of those adventurers previously spoken of—Denton Offut—engaged in buying a boat-load of produce to ship in the spring, fell in with young Lincoln. Conceiving a liking for him, and having learned also that he had previously taken a flat-boat down the Mississippi, Offut engaged him, together with his step-mother's son, John D. Johnston, and his mother's cousin, John Hanks, to take a flat-boat from Beardstown, on the Illinois River, to New Orleans.

Lincoln's first trip to New Orleans had been made from the Ohio River, while living in Indiana, and when he was in the nineteenth year of his age. On that occasion also he was a hired hand merely, and he and the son of the owner, without other assistance, made the trip. A part of the cargo had been selected with special reference to the wants of the sugar plantations, and the young adventurers were instructed to linger upon the sugar coast for the purpose of disposing of it. On one occasion they tied up their boat for the night near a plantation at which they had been trading during the afternoon. The negroes observing that the boat was in charge of but two persons, seven of them formed a plan to rob it during the night. Their intention evidently was to murder the young men, rob the boat of whatever money there might be on it, carry off such articles as they could secrete in their cabins, and then, by sinking the boat, destroy all traces of their guilt. They had not, however, properly estimated the courage and prowess of the two young men in charge. The latter, being on their guard, gave the would-be robbers and assassins a warm reception, and, notwithstanding the disparity in numbers, after a severe struggle, in which both Lincoln and his companion were considerably hurt, the former were driven from the boat. At the close of the fight, the young navigators lost no time in getting their boat again under way.

The trip in the main was successful, and in due time the young men returned to their homes in Indiana.

<sup>1</sup> A woman whose grandfather served with Mr. Lincoln in the Black Hawk War, and was his warm personal friend, once wrote about the "winter of the deep snow":

It was the worst winter ever experienced in the West. Snow began falling on the 26th day of December, 1830, and continued, with only short intermissions, for many days. Deer huddled along the banks of the creeks, and were devoured by great timber-wolves. Huge packs coursed the woods, and grew fat on venison. Grandfather had four small pigs which he tried to save by keeping them in a high railpen; but the wolves got them. After the snow had crusted so the deer could run over it, he scooped the snow out of his pen and used it for a trap. The deer would fall into it, and become an easy prey, furnishing the family with plenty of fresh meat.

At Old Settlers' Meetings in Illinois during the latter part of the last century, those who had lived in the State during the winter of 1830-1831 were called "Snow Birds," and were always shown special honor.

<sup>2</sup> Young Lincoln did not escape entirely unscathed. At one time he was laid up for several days with frozen feet at the home of Major William Warnick, who lived across the river from the Lincoln home. It is claimed, however, that he improved this time by reading *The Revised Statutes of Illinois*, and by cultivating the acquaintance of Miss Polly Warnick, the Major's pretty daughter. (Barton (d), 157-166; Tarbell (c), 159-160)



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Lincoln and his associates for a second trip, Johnson and Hanks, were to join Offut at Springfield, Illinois, as soon as the snow had disappeared, whence they were to go with him to Beardstown, the port of departure, for New Orleans. When the snow melted, which was about the first of March, the whole country was so flooded as to render traveling impracticable. This led the party to purchase a canoe, in which they descended the Sangamon River to a point within a few miles of Springfield. This was the time and this the method of Lincoln's first entrance into Sangamon county—a county which was to be the field of his future triumphs, which was to become proud of him as her most distinguished citizen, and which, in time, was to be honored through him with being the home of a President of the United States. On arriving at Springfield, they learned from Offut that, not having been able to purchase a boat in Beardstown, he had concluded to build one on the Sangamon River. Lincoln, Hanks, and Johnson were hired for that purpose, at twelve dollars per month, and going into the woods, they got out the necessary timber and built a boat at the town of Sangamon, near where the Chicago, Alton, and St. Louis Railroad now crosses the Sangamon River, which they took to New Orleans upon the old contract.

The writer has not been put in possession of any of the incidents connected with this trip. It is sufficient for the present purpose, however, to know that so well did young Lincoln bear himself throughout—so faithful in all the trusts reposed in him by his employer; so active, prompt, and efficient in all necessary labor; so cool, determined, and full of resources in the presence of danger—that before reaching New Orleans, Offut had become greatly attached to him, and on their return engaged him to take the general charge of a store and mill in the village of New Salem, then in Sangamon, now in Menard County.<sup>1</sup>

In July, 1831, Lincoln was fairly installed in this new business. In those primitive times the country merchant was a personage of vast consequence. He was made the repository of all the news of the surrounding settlements, and as he "took the papers," he was able to post his customers as to the affairs of state and the news of the world generally. His acquirements in this last respect were as astounding to the country people as were those of Goldsmith's village schoolmaster to the simple rustics. His store was a place of common resort for the people on rainy days, and at those periods of the year when farm-work was not pressing, and nearly always on Saturday afternoons. There all the topics of the neighborhood and of the times were discussed, the merchant usually bearing the leading part, and all disputed points of past history or of current events were always referred to him, as the ultimate tribunal, for decision. His word and opinion, in

<sup>1</sup> After disposing of their cargo and boat at New Orleans, they returned by steamer to St. Louis. Offut remained there for a time, buying and forwarding goods for his new store. Johnson and Lincoln journeyed across country to Coles County, where Thomas Lincoln by that time had become settled. Thomas was broken in health; the fever and ague from which he suffered during his first year in Illinois had undermined his constitution. Abraham remained with the family about a month before going on to New Salem. (Tarbell (a), 115; (c), 160-163; Barton (a), i, 152)

One member of the household, long afterward, told how Abraham on this visit found Dennis Hanks, Squire Hall, and their families, all living with Thomas in his cabin. When asking table blessings at that time, Thomas' daily prayer was, "Fit and prepare us for humble service." He evidently knew what he needed. Up to that time no humbler service had been discovered than living with eleven of a wife's relatives in a one-room cabin. To insure his parents such comfort as another room would afford them, Abraham insisted that one be added to their cabin; and he helped in its erection before he left. (Gridley, 107, 108, 173; Atkinson, 11, 45)

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these respects, were supreme, never disputed, and triumphantly repeated by the fortunate first-hearers at all casual meetings with neighbors, and at all the little neighborhood gatherings at which the oracle was not present.<sup>1</sup>

Young Lincoln's acquirements and natural gifts most admirably fitted him for the distinction awarded to men engaged in his new occupation. He had read a few books, as we have seen, had been twice to New Orleans, and otherwise had observed a good deal of the world, treasuring up whatever he had seen faithfully in his memory. He had an unfailing fund of anecdote; he was an admirable talker, sharp, witty, good-humored, and possessed also of an accommodating spirit which always led him to exert himself for the entertainment of his friends, as well as to be ever

<sup>1</sup> Young Lincoln's wide reading in Indiana had given him a vast fund of unorganized information, but a lack of formal schooling had left his education ragged and unsymmetrical. He realized this, and resolved to fill in the gaps. It would have been difficult for him to find another place as well suited for that purpose as New Salem. Because of its location on the river, many believed that it would become the metropolis of the Sangamo country; and that belief had attracted to it, from widely separated points, some very superior people. Mentor Graham, the schoolmaster, had a good education and a well-selected library of about fifty volumes; and he loved to instruct the studious and ambitious. Graham advised Abraham in his studies, and introduced him to prominent and influential men like John Calhoun, the County Surveyor, and John T. Stuart, a brilliant young attorney of Springfield. James Rutledge of the famous Southern Rutledges, and his partner, John Cameron, were men of learning and experience; and they, too, soon became interested in the young man. Dr. John Allen, a wise physician, was his sympathetic friend. Jack Kelso, it is said, could recite Shakespeare and Burns by the hour; and could point out in their writings beauties that had escaped the boy during his Indiana days. Living only four miles away, were Colonel and Mrs. Rogers, the parents of eight sons and daughters. The young people of the Rogers household had attended excellent schools while living in the East, and they had brought their text-books west with them. With the Rogers family Lincoln could exchange the ideas that he had gained through wide reading and deep study for the particular technical information of which he was then most in need. Bowling Green lent him books on law, and encouraged him to study them. (Rankin (a), 33-34; (b), 11, 61-88, 100-101; Tarbell (a), 116; (c), 172-173, 220; Barton (a), i, 193-199; Lamon (a), 121-122; T.O.S.L.L., 34, 54-55; Onstot, 74, 148-149, 217-221)

Because young Lincoln had political ambitions and a flair for writing, Menton Graham advised him to study Kirkham's English *Grammar*. Lincoln's previous devotion to the masters of English prose and verse had given him a good practical knowledge of how to use the language, but he probably knew little of its theory and rules before studying Kirkham. How well he mastered that work is shown by his later writings. Jesse W. Weik, who examined thousands of court documents in the Eighth District, many of them by college-trained men, marveled at the accuracy of the spelling, the punctuation, and grammatical construction of those written by Lincoln. When talking, Lincoln sometimes lapsed into colloquialisms, but his written compositions were unusually chaste and accurate. (Weik, 145; Tarbell (c), 256-257)

Nor did the young man lack friends in the prosaic, everyday necessity of making a living—his hardest task. The Green, Armstrong, Herndon, and several other homes, were open to him at all times. Hannah Armstrong mothered him, and patched his clothes. When his horse and surveying instruments were sold for debt, James Short bid them in and returned them to him. Coleman Smoot lent him the money he needed for the clothing which gave him a respectable appearance when he attended his first session of the General Assembly. (T.O.S.L.L., 53, 54, 64, 76, 86; Tarbell (a), 135, 191-192; (b) i, 107; Barton (a), i, 189-193; Whitney (b), i, 104-105; Lamon (a), 150-151; Onstot, 74)

The Clary Grove, the Wolf, the Little Grove, and the Sand Ridge "boys"—rough, roystering, big hearted, hard-working, and hard-drinking fellows—all soon fell under his spell. He joined in their games, and was friendly and good-natured whether victorious or defeated; and he knew how to check their excesses without seeming to be censorious. His physical powers gave him their admiration; his character, mentality, and disposition made the conquest complete. (Onstot, 72; Herndon, 82-84, 95, 107; Rankin (a), 31, 135; T.O.S.L.L., 22-28, 38-42; Whitney (b), i, 80-84)

While he lived in New Salem, young Lincoln always had plenty of friends who were ready to supply his necessities, advance his interests, and do him honor.

Offutt's business soon failed; and that likeable disciple of Colonel Sellers vanished from view, leaving his clerk out of a job. Offutt never returned to New Salem, but he was afterwards seen in both the East and South in the role of veterinary and a tamer of vicious horses. He claimed to subdue refractory horses by whispering some magical words in their ears; and he would impart his method to others for five dollars, binding each purchaser by oath not to divulge the secret. William G. Green once saw him at Memphis, Tennessee. Thomas W. McNeeley encountered him in Mississippi while he was filling a horse-charming engagement. Offutt seemed delighted to see McNeeley, and inquired about all his old New Salem friends. He was especially pleased to get news of his former clerk, and sent word to Lincoln that he ought to get out of the "rascally" law business and do something "honest" like selling horse-training secrets. (Barton (a), i, 168-169; Herndon, 85-86; Whitney (b), i, 86-87)

William G. Green, who also worked in the Offutt store, was one of the closest friends that Lincoln ever had. Green was so shrewd that he was sometimes called "Slick Bill Green." Before his death, he became a wealthy banker. (Tarbell (a), 117; Onstot, 95-96, 140; Whitney (b), i, 84)



ready to do any of them a kind and neighborly turn when his assistance was needed. In a very little time he had become the most popular man in the neighborhood. His new acquaintances respected him for his uprightness, honored him for his intelligence, admired him for his genial and social qualities, and loved him for that deep, earnest sympathy which he ever manifested for those who were unfortunate in their enterprises, or who were overtaken by some great sorrow. How much they confided in him, honored and loved him, will be seen a little further on.

Early in the following spring (1832) the Black Hawk war broke out in the northwestern part of the State. The previous year a part of the tribes of the Sac and Fox Indians had recrossed the Mississippi from its western bank, and taken possession of their old town on Rock River, a few miles above its mouth, and about four miles from where the city of Rock Island is now situated. The Indian title to the lands in that vicinity had been extinguished by a treaty made with the chiefs of the Sac and Fox Nations at St. Louis, in 1804, which treaty was afterwards confirmed by a portion of the tribes in 1815, and by another portion in 1816. Black Hawk always denied the validity of these treaties, and, in fact, of all the treaties made by his people with the whites. In the war of 1812, he had co-operated with the British army, and had conceived an unconquerable hatred of the Americans. The lands on which the great town of his nation was situated had recently been surveyed and brought into market, and a number of white settlers had gone upon them. This aroused the enmity of the old chieftain, and taking with him his women and children, and as many warriors as he could inspire with the same feeling, he returned to his former haunts, took possession of the ancient metropolis of his people, ordered the white settlers away, killed their stock, unroofed their houses, pulled down their fences, and cut up their growing grain. News of these outrages reaching Gov. Reynolds, at his request Gen. Gaines proceeded at once to Rock Island. Becoming convinced that Black Hawk meditated war on the settlers, Gen. Gaines called upon Gov. Reynolds for a small force of mounted volunteers. These were soon in the field, and in a short time, together with a few regular troops, appeared before Black Hawk's town. The latter, with his women and children and fighting men, retreated across the Mississippi without firing a gun; the volunteers destroyed the town, and encamped upon the Mississippi, on the site of the present city of Rock Island. Black Hawk, anticipating that the troops would follow him to the west side of the river, came into Fort Armstrong and sued for peace. A treaty was then made in which it was stipulated that Black Hawk's people should remain forever after on the west side of the river, never to recross it without permission of the President of the United States or the Governor of Illinois.\* This treaty proved to be but an Indian's stratagem. Black Hawk's sole object in making it was to gain time in order to perfect his preparations. He was fully bent upon war, and early in the following spring he recrossed the Mississippi, in force, moving up the valley of the Rock River to the country of the Pottawatomies and the Winnebagoes, whom he hoped to make his allies.

As soon as apprized of these facts, Gov. Reynolds issued a call for

\* Ford's History of Illinois, page 108, et seq.

four regiments of volunteers. Among the earliest in his neighborhood to enroll himself for this service, was young Lincoln. A company was formed in New Salem, and to his own great surprise, though doubtless not to the surprise of any one else, Lincoln was chosen captain. This was the first evidence he had ever received of popularity among his acquaintances, and he has often said, later in life and since he has won the distinction of a leading man in the nation, that no other success ever gave him so much unalloyed satisfaction. The volunteers rendezvoused at Beardstown. Here Lincoln's company joined its regiment, and after a few days of rapid marching the scene of conflict was reached. It is not the intention to give an account of this war. It was of short duration. Black Hawk took the field early in April. In the last days of the following July the decisive battle of the Bad Axe was fought, which put an end to the war; and a few days thereafter Black Hawk, and his principal braves who had escaped the bullet and the bayonet, were prisoners of war at Fort Armstrong, on Rock Island. But short as it was, the Indians showed themselves to be courageous, desperate, and merciless. Their war parties traversed the whole country from Rock Island to the neighborhood of Chicago, and from the Illinois River into the territory of Wisconsin; they occupied every grove, waylaid every road, hung around every settlement, picked off many of the settlers without regard to age, sex, or condition, and attacked every small party of white men that attempted to penetrate the country.\*

The first levy of volunteers was called out for but thirty days. At the end of that time they were disbanded at Ottawa without having seen the enemy.

When the troops were disbanded, most of them returned home. Lincoln, however, had gone out for the war, and a new levy being called for, he again volunteered and served as a private. A second time his regiment was disbanded, and again he volunteered. When his third term of service had expired the war was about concluded, and he returned home. Having lost his horse, near where the town of Janesville, Wisconsin, now stands, he went down Rock River to Dixon in a canoe. Thence he crossed the country on foot to Peoria, where he again took canoe to a point on the Illinois River within forty miles of home. The latter distance he accomplished on foot, having been in active service nearly three months. We have been told by men who were with Lincoln during this campaign, that he was always prompt and energetic in the performance of duty, never shirking from danger or hardship; that he was a universal favorite, the best talker, the best story-teller, and the best at a wrestling-match or a foot-race in the whole army. He still owns the land in Iowa on which his own warrants for this service were located.

\* Ford's History of Illinois, page 128.

## CHAPTER IV.

### MERCHANT—SURVEYOR—LEGISLATOR—LAWYER.

Lincoln a Candidate for the Legislature—The vote of New Salem—Merchant again—Studies English Grammar—Deputy Surveyor—Elected to the Legislature—Douglas's Opinion of Lincoln—The True Test of Genius—Studies Law, and removes to Springfield—A Reminiscence—Lincoln's First Speech—Political Complexion of Illinois for Twenty Years—Lincoln Recognized as a Leader—Twice he receives the vote of his Party for Speaker—Summary of his career in the State Legislature.

Prior to the adoption of the present constitution of Illinois, in 1847, elections for State officers and Members of the Legislature were held on the first Monday in August—for the former once in four years, for the latter once in every two years. Lincoln's return to New Salem was, therefore, but a few days before the election of that year for Members of the Legislature. The system of nominating candidates for office by county and State conventions had not then been introduced into Illinois. Indeed, party lines and party designations were at that time scarcely known in the State. There were "Clay Men," "Jackson Men," "Adams Men," "Crawford Men," and so on, but no clearly defined party creeds around which men of similar views rallied to make common cause against those holding opposite opinions. Men announced themselves as candidates for the various elective offices. It was a very rare circumstance that a contest for an office was narrowed down to two candidates. More frequently a half dozen eager aspirants contested the prize.

The county of Sangamon was entitled to four members in the lower branch of the Legislature, and there were at the time of Lincoln's return, more than twice that number of candidates. Among the number were some of the ablest, best known, and most popular men of the county, of whom may be mentioned John T. Stuart, afterwards Representative in Congress, Col. E. D. Taylor, Peter Cartwright, the famous eccentric Methodist preacher, and others of considerable note. These gentlemen had been in the field some time before the return of Lincoln—had canvassed the county thoroughly, defining their position on local and other questions, and obtaining promises of support.

Lincoln had no sooner returned than he was urgently besought by his friends at New Salem to enter the lists for the Legislature against this array of strong men and old citizens. These entreaties, continued from day to day, together with the cordial reception he had just received at the hands of all his old acquaintances, induced him, against his better judgment, to give a reluctant assent, knowing very well that, under the circumstances, his election was entirely out of the question. It will be remembered that the county was a large one; that he had lived in it only from July to the following April; that he had but few acquaintances outside of the precinct of New Salem; and that the election was so near at hand as to deprive him of the opportunity of visiting other portions of the county, and making himself known to the people. Nevertheless, when the election came off, he was but a few votes behind the successful candidates. His own precinct—



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New Salem—gave him 277 votes in a poll of 284; and this too in the face of his avowed preferences for Mr. Clay, and notwithstanding the same precinct at the Presidential election, three months later, gave a majority of 115 for General Jackson.<sup>1</sup> The result of this election, though practically a defeat, was, all circumstances considered, a most brilliant triumph, clearly presaging success in any future trial he might make. And never since that day has Mr. Lincoln been beaten in any direct vote of the people.

Having received such generous treatment at the hands of his New Salem friends, Mr. Lincoln resolved to make the place his permanent home. He was wholly without means, and at a loss as to what he should try to do. At one time he had almost concluded to learn the trade of a blacksmith. Those who discerned in the young man qualities which he had not yet suspected himself to be the possessor of, urged him to turn his attention to the profession of law; but he always met suggestions of this character with objections based upon his lack of education. While yet in a quandary as to the future, he was very unexpectedly met with a proposition to purchase on credit, in connection with another man as poor as himself, an old stock of goods. The offer was accepted, and forthwith he was installed at the head of a village store. It is needless to recount the difficulties which beset him as a merchant. It is enough to say that after a manly struggle with certain adverse circumstances for which he was not responsible, he relinquished the business, finding himself encumbered with debt—which he afterwards paid to the last farthing. While engaged in this business he received the appointment of post-master of New Salem—the profits of the office being too insignificant to make his politics an objection.

Again thrown out of employment, Mr. Lincoln now turned his attention more than ever to books.<sup>2</sup> He read everything that fell in his way; he kept himself well posted in national politics; he accustomed himself to write out his views on various topics of general interest, though not for the public eye; and realizing in these exercises the importance of a correct knowledge of English Grammar, he took up that study for the first time.<sup>3</sup> About this period he made the acquaintance of John Calhoun, then living in Springfield, and afterwards notorious for his efforts to maintain Democratic

<sup>1</sup> That young Lincoln had "arrived"—physically, mentally and morally—before leaving Indiana is indicated by the reaction of those who knew him at New Salem. Denton Offutt declared that Abraham "knew more than any other man in the United States." William G. Greene, his fellow clerk, soon came to believe him "the greatest man who ever lived." His immediate ascendancy over both the rowdies and the intellectuals was so complete that within a little more than a year after arriving at New Salem he had been urged to become a candidate for the General Assembly of the State; had received 277 out of the 284 votes in his own precinct; had been elected captain of his company in the Black Hawk War; and had attracted the favorable notice of the leading attorneys and politicians of Springfield. (Tarbell (b), i, 66; (c), 169-187; Whitney (b), i, 84; T.O.S.L.L., 42; Nicolay & Hay, i, 641; Richards, 3-4)

<sup>2</sup> Among the books that he is known to have read or studied at New Salem are: Hale's *History of the United States*; an *American Military Biography*; Rollin's *Ancient History*; Worcester's *Ancient and Modern History*; Gibbon's *Roman Empire*; Volney's *Ruins*; Paine's *Age of Reason*; Shakespeare and Burns' *Poems*; and works on *Law* by Blackstone, Greenleaf, Chitty, and Story. Beveridge quotes R. B. Herndon as saying that during this period, in addition to studying law, Lincoln read history, astronomy, philosophy, chemistry, and the newspapers. Beveridge also says that there were "many books in and around New Salem," and that the "enquiring and insatiable Lincoln" read them "with infinite care." (Herndon, 110, 113, 324, 439; Beveridge, i, 133-139)

<sup>3</sup> The Dillworth *Spelling Book—A New Guide to the English Tongue*, which Abraham used as a child, contained one section of thirty-eight pages in which "Practical English Grammar" was taught. While he probably never recited from that part of his little book, his casual reading in it no doubt gave him some knowledge of the science of grammar even before he took up the Kirkman work.



supremacy in Kansas, and as President of the Lecompton Constitutional Convention. Mr. Calhoun was then County Surveyor for Sangamon county. The great influx of immigrants before spoken of, and the consequent active entry of the government lands, gave him more business in the way of establishing corners, and tracing boundary lines, than he could well attend to. Conceiving a liking for Mr. Lincoln, Calhoun offered to depute to him that portion of the work contiguous to New Salem. Lincoln had no knowledge of surveying, or of the science on which it is based; but he was now too much absorbed by a desire for improvement to decline a position which, while securing a livelihood, would enable him to increase his acquirements. He accepted the kind proffer of Mr. Calhoun, contrived to procure a compass and chain, set himself down to the study of Flint and Gibson, and in a very short time took the field as a surveyor. Mr. Lincoln never forgot or ceased to be grateful for this kindness. Although he and Mr. Calhoun were ever afterwards political opponents, he always treated him fairly, placed the most charitable construction possible upon his actions, and never lost an opportunity to do a kindly act either for him or his family.

In the summer of 1834, Mr. Lincoln was again a candidate for the Legislature. He had now become acquainted with the people throughout the county; and although they had not seen enough of him to have learned to appreciate him quite as highly as the people of New Salem precinct, nevertheless he was this time elected by an overwhelming majority, and by the largest vote cast for any candidate. Up to this period, and, indeed, for the two years after, Mr. Lincoln was not aware that he possessed any faculty for public speaking. His acquaintances knew him to be an admirable talker, full of original thought, a close reasoner, united to a matchless gift of illustration; and from their eager desire to get him into the Legislature, it is more than probable that they believed he would there develop into a forcible and ready debater. Whatever they had known him to undertake he had done well; and they therefore had faith in his success, should he enter this new and untried field of effort. In one of his memorable debates with Stephen A. Douglas, in 1858, the latter, in alluding to the early experiences in life, as well as to the later efforts of his opponent, said:—"*Lincoln is one of those peculiar men who perform with admirable skill everything they undertake.*" Douglas had known and watched him closely for a quarter of a century—watched him not as an admirer and friend, but as a political opponent whom he always dreaded to encounter, and whose failure in anything would have given him sincere gratification,—and this was the conclusion to which he had been forced to come contrary to his wishes. To be able to rise with the occasion, and to never fall below it, is one of the surest marks of genius; and we have the authority of the man, who, of all men in the world, is the least likely to be biased in Mr. Lincoln's favor, for saying that he has never failed to come up to this standard. The trait of character to which Mr. Douglas thus bore reluctant testimony, had been early remarked by Lincoln's friends. It was not wonderful, therefore, that they had implicit faith in him—that, although young and wholly inexperienced in legislation, they cheerfully confided their interests to his keeping, for in his past life they had the strongest

possible guarantee that in this new sphere he would make himself "master of the situation," and fully equal to all of its duties.

But in the session of 1834-5, Mr. Lincoln did not attempt to make a speech. He was faithful in his attendance, watchful of the interests of his constituents, acquired the confidence of his fellow-members as a man of sound judgment and patriotic purposes, and in this manner he wielded a greater influence in shaping and controlling legislation than many of the noisy declaimers and most frequent speakers of the body.<sup>1</sup> His constituents were satisfied—so well satisfied, indeed, that they re-elected him in 1836, again in 1838, and again in 1840, and would have continued electing him, had he desired it; but by this time, as we shall presently see, his circumstances and position were greatly changed, and there were higher duties before him.

During the canvass for the Legislature, in 1834, Mr. Lincoln was thrown considerably into the company of Hon. John T. Stuart, of Springfield, then a candidate for re-election. The latter gentleman, with his accustomed penetration, was not long in discovering in his retiring and unassuming companion powers of mind which, if properly developed, could not fail to confer distinction upon their possessor. To Lincoln's great surprise, Mr. Stuart warmly urged him to study law. Mr. Stuart was a gentleman of education, an able lawyer, and in every respect one of the foremost men of the State. Advice of this character, tendered by one so competent to give it, could not be otherwise than gratifying to a young man as yet unknown to fame outside of New Salem precinct, and being accompanied by a generous offer to loan him whatever books he might need, Lincoln resolved to follow it. As soon as the election was over, he took home with him a few books from the law library of Mr. Stuart, and entered upon their study in his usually earnest way. When the Legislature met, in the following December, the law books were laid aside, but were resumed again immediately after the adjournment. In the autumn of 1836, Mr. Lincoln was admitted to the bar, and on the 15th day of the following April, having formed a copartnership with his old friend Stuart, he removed to Springfield, and entered upon his professional career.

During all this time—that is, from his acceptance of the post of deputy-surveyor under Calhoun until he removed to Springfield, in 1837—he supported himself by occasional jobs of surveying. Of course he was compelled to live as cheaply as possible, to dress, as he had always done before and always has done since, in plain, simple garb, and to study at night by the light of the fire—candles being a luxury he could not then afford. Yet he was always buoyant, enjoyed life, and never once fancied that his condition was otherwise than an enviable one. His most severe

<sup>1</sup> During his first two sessions of the legislature, young Lincoln came in contact with a great number of brainy men who afterwards became famous. Among them were Justin Butterfield, a noted lawyer who later was to defeat Lincoln in a contest for the commissionership of the General Land Office; Josiah Lanborn and Usher F. Linder, both of whom were elected Attorney General of Illinois; John Reynolds, formerly Governor of the State, later a writer of its history; Ninian W. Edwards of Springfield, and Cyrus Edwards of Madison County, into whose family Lincoln afterwards married; Jesse K. Dubois, who first seriously mentioned him for the Presidency; John A. McClernand, a general in the Civil War and a noted War Democrat; Orlando B. Ficklin, who served in Congress at the same time that Lincoln did; James Shields, later Senator from three States; John J. Hardin, who fell while leading his regiment at Buena Vista; Orville H. Browning, who, during the war, as a Senator from Illinois, was Mr. Lincoln's spokesman in the Senate; and Stephen A. Douglas, his political rival for many years. (Beveridge, i, 177-182; Linder, 55-88)



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annoyances grew out of his rare gifts as a talker. His friends *would* come to see him and to hear him talk, and whenever a stranger sojourned for a day or more in New Salem, these friends could not forego the gratification of showing off the fine points of the village favorite. Apropos to incidents of this character, is the following, related by Hon. Richard Yates, the distinguished Republican candidate for Governor of Illinois, in a speech delivered at Springfield, on the 7th of June last, to a meeting composed of Mr. Lincoln's old friends and neighbors, many of whom had known him intimately at the time referred to. Said Mr. Yates:

"I recollect the first time I ever saw Old Abe, and I have a great mind to tell you, though I don't know that I ought to. ['Yes, go on—go on.'] It was more than a quarter of a century ago. [A voice, 'He was "Young Abe" then.'] I was down at Salem with a friend, who remarked to me one day, 'I'll go over and introduce you to a fine young fellow we have here—a smart, genial, active young fellow, *and we'll be certain to have a good talk.*' I consented, and he took me down to a collection of four or five houses, and looking over the way, I saw a young man partly lying or resting on a cellar door, intently engaged in reading. My friend took me up and introduced me to young Lincoln, and I tell you, as he rose up, I would not have shot at him *then* for a President. [Laughter.] Well, after some pleasant conversation—for *Lincoln talked then just as he does now*—we all went up to dinner. You know we all lived in a very plain way in those times. The house was a rough log house, with a puncheon floor and clapboard roof, and might have been built, like Solomon's Temple, 'without the sound of hammer or nail,' for there was no iron in it. [Laughter.] The old lady whose house it was soon provided us with a dinner, the principal ingredient of which was a great bowl of milk, which she handed to each. Somehow in serving Lincoln there was a mistake made, and his bowl tipped up, and the bowl of milk rolled over the floor. The good old lady was in deep distress, and exclaimed, 'Oh dear me! that's all my fault.' Lincoln picked up the bowl in the best natured way in the world, remarking to her, 'Aunt Lizzy, we'll not discuss whose fault it was; only if it don't worry you, it don't worry me.' [Laughter and applause.] The old lady was comforted, and gave him another bowl of milk. [Renewed laughter.]

"My friend Green, who introduced me to Lincoln told me the first time he ever saw him he was in the Sangamon River, with his pants rolled up some five feet, more or less [great merriment], trying to pilot a flat-boat over a mill-dam. The boat had got so full of water that it was very difficult to manage, and almost impossible to get it over the dam. Lincoln finally contrived to get her prow over so that it projected a few feet, and there it stood. But he then invented a new way of bailing a flat-boat. He bored a hole through the bottom, to let the water run out, and then corked her up, and she launched right over. [Great laughter.] I think the captain who proved himself so fitted to navigate the broad-horn over the dam, is no doubt the man who is to stand upon the deck of the old ship, 'The Constitution,' and guide her safely over the billows and breakers that surround her." [Enthusiastic and prolonged applause.]

It has been already stated that Lincoln was a *working* member of the Legislature at the session of 1834-5, but did not attempt the *role* of a speaker. The convention system had been introduced into Illinois by Stephen A. Douglas, in 1834; and about that time the opponents of the administration began calling themselves "Whigs," and laying the foundation of a party organization. Party spirit soon began to run high, and political discussions between leading men of the two parties were of frequent occurrence. Lincoln's first speech was made during the canvass for the Legislature in 1836. The candidates had met at Springfield by appointment for the purpose of a public discussion. A large concourse of citizens had assembled in the court-house to listen to the speeches. Ninian W. Edwards, then a Whig, led off. He was followed by Dr. Early, who was regarded as one of the most effective debaters on the Democratic side in the State. Early was severe upon Edwards, and the latter was desirous of making an immediate rejoinder. But Early's speech had aroused Lincoln.



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His name was the next on the programme, and telling Edwards to be patient, he arose to reply. Although embarrassed at the beginning, his exordium gave indications of what was to come. He began in that slow and deliberate manner which is still one of his marked characteristics as a speaker, succinctly and lucidly stating the principles of the two parties, carefully laying down his premises, and weaving a network of facts and deductions around his adversary, from which escape was utterly impossible. In less than five minutes all traces of embarrassment had disappeared. As he warmed with his subject, his tall form grew proudly erect, his gray eye burning and flashing with an intensity never witnessed before, and all his features in full play—now mantling with humor, as some well-aimed shaft of ridicule penetrated and disclosed a weak place in his opponent's argument, and now glowing with an honest indignation, as he laid bare the sophisms and misrepresentations with which it abounded. When he sat down, his reputation was made. Not only had he achieved a signal victory over the acknowledged champion of Democracy, but he had placed himself, by a single effort, in the very front rank of able and eloquent debaters. The surprise of his audience was only equalled by their enthusiasm; and of all the surprised people on that memorable occasion, perhaps no one was more profoundly astonished than Lincoln himself. In the election which followed, Early was defeated, and with him every Democratic candidate on the ticket—a result to which Lincoln's masterly efforts before the people largely contributed.

In the following December, Lincoln took his seat a second time in the Legislature. It is proper to state here that Illinois, until of late years, has always been strongly Democratic. It gave its electoral vote to Jackson in 1832, to Van Buren in 1836 and in 1840, to Polk in 1844, to Cass in 1848, and to Pierce in 1852. During these twenty years, with the exception of a part of Gov. Duncan's term, who was elected as a Jackson man, but identified himself with the Whig party before the close of his administration, all the State offices and the State Legislature were in the possession of the Democratic party. The whole responsibility of the State government devolved upon that party. The Whigs in the Legislature, as a party, had no power to inaugurate a policy of their own. Their hands were effectually tied. The most they could do was, in cases in which their opponents differed among themselves on questions of policy, to throw their votes on the side that seemed to them the least mischievous. Such was the condition of things when Mr. Lincoln entered the Legislature in 1834. It had not altered in any respect when he took his seat a second time in that body in 1836, nor indeed at any subsequent period while he remained a member of it. During the session of 1836-37, he was recognized from the start as a leader of his party on the floor of the House, and made such a reputation for himself in that capacity, that both in 1838 and in 1840, he received the unanimous vote of his party friends for speaker.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> John T. Stuart—the leader of the minority party in the House of Representatives of the State, and so apt in political intrigue that he received the sobriquet of "Jerry Sly"—was elected to Congress. Lincoln, by that time Stuart's first-lieutenant, was promptly chosen as Stuart's successor. That gave Lincoln much importance as a Whig leader in the commonwealth. After he located at Springfield, a little coterie—Lincoln, Logan, and Baker—firmly but tactfully guided the destinies of their party in Illinois. They organized the State thoroughly; decided what issues should be stressed; dictated policies; even decided in some cases who should, and who should not, run for local offices. (Linder, 48; Beveridge, i, 185, 209, 238, 244, 302-303; Tarbell (c), 229)

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The details of State legislation afford but few matters of interest to the general reader, and for that reason it is not proposed to follow Mr. Lincoln through this portion of his career. It is enough to say on this head, that he was always watchful of the public interests, labored zealously and with great efficiency for whatever he believed would promote the welfare of the State, and opposed with untiring energy every measure that he thought would have an opposite tendency. He entered the body in 1834, the youngest member in it, with a fame that had not extended beyond the limits of his own county; distrustful of himself by reason of his lack of education; inexperienced in legislation; and having no knowledge of the arts and chicanery with which he would have to contend. He left in 1840, by common consent the ablest man in it; the recognized leader of his party in the House and in the State; his name familiar as a household word from Cairo to Galena, and from the Wabash to the Mississippi; and with a reputation for honesty and integrity which not even the bitterest of his political opponents had the hardihood to asperse.

## CHAPTER V.

Resolves to devote himself to his Profession—The Presidential Canvass of 1840—Is placed on the Electoral Ticket—First Contests with Douglas—The Law again—Some of Lincoln's characteristics as a Lawyer—His Marriage—The Canvass of 1844—Is again placed on the Electoral Ticket—Discussions with Calhoun (of Kansas notoriety)—His Speeches on the Tariff—Speeches in Indiana.

On retiring from the Legislature it was the intention of Mr. Lincoln to devote himself exclusively to the labors of his profession.<sup>1</sup> His own convictions on the questions which divided parties were deeply-rooted and immovable. His party in the State was in a hopeless minority. There seemed but small opportunity for a man of his views to succeed in politics, while the qualities that he had by this time developed insured both an honorable fame and a lucrative income in his profession. To this he now turned with all the earnestness of his nature, and with a firm resolve to win laurels in it worth the wearing. But he was not permitted long to give his exclusive attention to professional pursuits. The ground-swell of that

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Lincoln began the practice of law at Springfield in the spring of 1837 as the junior partner of Major John T. Stuart. Stuart was neither as industrious nor learned as some then in practice; but his natural ability and pleasing personality made him one of the most effective jury lawyers in the State, a dangerous opponent in any legal battle. As the junior, working partner, Lincoln had most of the office work to do; and he was sometimes sent out to take care of the firm's business on the Circuit. This gave him exactly the practice he needed, even though it sometimes entailed more drudgery than he liked. Usually, he had to rely upon his own resources; but when it was necessary, he could call on Stuart for assistance and advice. (Hill, 70; Linder, 19, 347-349; Richards 26-27; Cullom, 62; Whitney (a), 136)

He was now pitted in the courts against men of much natural ability. Many of them afterwards attained great eminence. Hill doubts if the professional ability of the bar in any other State in the Union then equaled that of Illinois. Attorneys like Logan, the Edwardses, Browning, Thomas, Baker, Douglas, Shields, Hardin, Dubois, Linder, Judd, Gillispie, and Williams, all of whom Mr. Lincoln met in the Circuit or other Courts, were foemen who would try the steel of any warrior. He acquitted himself so well in that company and showed so much potential ability that, in 1841, Judge Logan, the acknowledged leader of the Illinois bar, offered him a partnership, which he accepted. (Hill, 95; Whitney, (a), 18, 265; Richards, 26)

Judge Stephen T. Logan was born in Kentucky in 1800. He received a good education, and was admitted to the bar before attaining his majority. After serving as Commonwealth Attorney in his native State for ten years, he went to Illinois. He located at Springfield in 1833. Two years later, he became Circuit Judge; but resigned in 1839 to resume practice. His subsequent leadership of the local bar has never been questioned. At one time, he was on one side or the other of nearly every important case tried in the courts in which he practiced. He was industrious, methodical, orderly, careful of detail, and painstaking in the preparation of his cases. (Bateman & Selby, i, 342; Power, 446; Hill, 112-117, 119, 133; Linder, 155-159; Cullom, 39)

That Lincoln appreciated his opportunity for development, and strove to improve it, is indicated by the court records of the cases that he tried, and by his once saying that his greatest ambition was to become as good a lawyer as Judge Logan. Hill says that Lincoln adopted his partner's methods, that he began preparing his cases with the utmost care, and that this work soon showed in the results he achieved. Instead of being occasionally dangerous, he became a formidable opponent whenever he believed that his cause was just. (Linder, 155; Hill, 120)

The partnership between Judge Logan and Mr. Lincoln was dissolved late in 1843 or early in 1844. One reason for their separation probably was that Judge Logan took too large a share of the profits. The clashing of their political ambitions may have had some influence. It is believed, however, that the chief cause was Mr. Lincoln's desire to head a firm of his own. He was a natural leader, and he never enjoyed occupying a subordinate position. (Hill, 125-126, 132; Richards, 21-27; Newton, 19)

Soon after leaving Judge Logan, Mr. Lincoln invited a young attorney, William H. Herndon, to join him in establishing a new firm to be known as Lincoln & Herndon. Herndon had studied in the Logan & Lincoln office, and he had many influential relatives. The junior partner virtually occupied the position of a chief clerk, but he received one-half of the profits. Had it not been for his unfortunate habits, Herndon probably should have been a college professor. He was an omnivorous reader of good literature. It is claimed that at one time he bought and read more new books on science, philosophy, history, pedagogy, medicine, theology, and general literature, than all the rest of the professional people in Springfield put together. Religiously, he was a skeptic; Newton says a "rationalist," perhaps a "naturalist." Politically, he was an Abolitionist. Taken by himself, he was not considered a great lawyer. During the two years that Mr. Lincoln was in Congress, Herndon had only two cases in the Supreme Court, and they involved a total of less than twenty-five dollars and costs. But he was loyal to his chief; and while he was under Lincoln's restraining influence, he was a valuable assistant. (Rankin (b), 111-151; Newton, 10-20, 22; Hill, 143; Tarbell (c), 278; Richards, 73-74)



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political resolution which in 1840 carried the Whig party into power in the national government, had no sooner been felt, than there was a universal desire awakened among the Whigs of Illinois to make one more effort to carry the State over to the Whig column. Mr. Lincoln was assigned a place on the Electoral ticket—a position which he accepted with reluctance, but which he filled with great zeal and ability. In that memorable canvass he repeatedly met Mr. Douglas on the stump; and it is no disparagement to that gentleman to say, that then, as in later years, Mr. Lincoln proved himself to be immeasurably his superior—superior in logic, in argument, in resources as a debater, in broad and comprehensive views of national policy, in fairness and in gentlemanly courtesy towards his competitor.

After the election of that year, Mr. Lincoln returned to his professional duties. He had now obtained a reputation at the bar which placed him in the front rank of the many able and profound jurists of the State. His services were eagerly sought in almost every case of importance; and perhaps no lawyer in Illinois or any other State has been more uniformly successful in the cases which he has undertaken.<sup>1</sup> It is one of the peculiarities of Mr. Lincoln as a lawyer, that he holds himself bound in honor and in conscience, having accepted a fee, to thoroughly master the case of his client. In this regard he is noted among his professional brethren for the greatness of his labors.<sup>2</sup> He not only studies the side of his client, but that of his opponent also. Consequently he is never taken unawares, but has ample resources for whatever turn the ingenuity, skill, or learning of opposing counsel may give to the case. To this peculiarity, in part, is owing the well-known fact that whenever Mr. Lincoln is employed in connection with other eminent counsel, before the conclusion of the case the sole management of it is almost invariably surrendered to him. Not by any ostentatious thrusting of himself forwards is this position obtained, for nothing could be more foreign to Mr. Lincoln's manner, either at the bar or elsewhere; but proving himself to be more completely master of the case than his associates, the latter voluntarily award the position to him, and

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Lincoln's success before juries, the courts, and on appeals to the higher courts, gradually caused both litigants and attorneys to seek his help. Local firms at various places would arrange for him to try their cases for them, and they secured additional clients by reason of the association. He at length extended his practice to every part of the State, and Moores says that "there came a time when he was considered necessary in every important case." Many court records have been lost by fire, but it is believed that he tried more cases, large and small, than any other lawyer of his day. In the Illinois Supreme Court alone, he argued 175 cases, winning 96 of them—a record that has rarely, if ever, been equaled since. Many believe with Moores that when Mr. Lincoln discontinued practice he was easily the leader of the Illinois bar. Hill says that his leadership was everywhere acknowledged. Richards speaks of him as a leader of the bar, but tells with apparent approval of his being called the leader of the Illinois bar. Angle, after examining many court records, came to the conclusion that "where it was necessary to jump into a case with little or no preparation \* \* \* he was not more than ordinarily successful"; but "where there was time to study the law and to plan carefully the conduct of a case, Lincoln was an outstanding lawyer." Beveridge says that Lincoln was the acknowledged leader of the Eighth Circuit. Arnold thought him the best jury lawyer in the State. (Hill, 168-286; Richards, 43-84; Moores, 491-502, 520; Angle, 40; Beveridge, i, 517, 572-573; Arnold, 84; Newton, 43; Weik, 145; Rice, 123-141)

<sup>2</sup> After Lincoln's death, Herndon sought to leave the impression that Mr. Lincoln did little technical work, that he left the details of his cases largely to others. Richards and Moores, themselves distinguished lawyers, searched the records where Lincoln practiced; and they deny this. Richards says that Lincoln "must have been a tireless worker" to have written out all the papers in his own handwriting which are of record. Moores uncovered so many pleadings (not yet stolen) written with laborious care by Lincoln that he wonders how Lincoln found time to do anything else. It is true that while Mr. Lincoln was busily engaged in politics, as during his debates with Douglas, he left the preparation of his cases to his office force. Rankin, who spent some time as a student in the Lincoln & Herndon office, says that even then Mr. Lincoln took the principal part in conducting the trial of his important cases, that his helpers were astonished at his ability to grasp and retain the details of a lawsuit, and that he never blundered as to either the evidence or the points of law. (Richards, 41, 73; Moores, 497; Rankin (b), 143-144)

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even insist upon his taking it. Another peculiarity of Mr. Lincoln as a lawyer, is the fact that he is ever ready to give his assistance gratuitously to a poor client who has justice and right on his side. He has managed many such cases from considerations of a purely benevolent character, which he would not have undertaken for a fee. More than this, in cases of peculiar hardship, he has been known, again and again, after throwing all of his power and ability as a lawyer into the management of the case, without charge, or any other reward than the gratification of a noble nature, on bidding his client adieu, and when receiving his cordial thanks and the warm grasp of his hand, to slip into his palm a five or a ten dollar bill, bidding him to say nothing about it, but to take heart and be hopeful. Those who know him intimately will not be surprised at this relation, because it harmonizes well with his whole character; but so careful has he always been to conceal his charitable deeds that the knowledge of such actions on his part is confined to those who have come into possession of it without his agency.<sup>1</sup>

In November, 1842, Mr. Lincoln was united in marriage to Miss Mary Todd, daughter of Hon. Robert S. Todd, of Lexington, Kentucky. The fruits of this union are three sons now living, and one dead. The eldest, now in his seventeenth year, is a student at Exeter Academy, New Hampshire, preparatory to entering Harvard University. The other sons are intelligent promising lads. Mrs. Lincoln is a lady of charming presence, of superior intelligence, of accomplished manners, and, in every respect well fitted to adorn the position in which the election of her husband to the Presidency will place her. The courtesies and hospitalities of the White House have never been more appropriately and gracefully dispensed than they will be during the administration of Mr. Lincoln.<sup>2</sup>

From the retirement of his professional avocations, Mr. Lincoln was again called by his party to perform the labors of an elector for the State at large in the canvass of 1844. He entered upon the duties with his

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Lincoln's failure to demand adequate compensation for his services sometimes made him the despair of his friends. Once when sent a check for \$25 for some work, he returned \$10, and denied being "a high-priced lawyer." On another occasion, he insisted on returning one-half of a fee which a client had willingly paid to his associate counsel in accordance with an agreement made in advance. Judge David Davis publicly reprimanded him for his "picayune charges." It is said that his income from his practice averaged only between \$2,000 and \$3,000 a year. He grew more thrifty with the years, and the government bonds he bought during the war soon appreciated greatly in value. His estate, after being for some time in the capable hands of Judge Davis, amounted to \$110,000. (Rothschild (a), 130-194; Hill, 119, 243; Whitney (a), 59, 64; Tarbell (c), 221; Beveridge, i, 554-560)

<sup>2</sup> Ninian W. Edwards, son of a former Governor of the State, was one of Mr. Lincoln's Springfield friends. Edwards was wealthy, a good lawyer, and a successful politician. Mrs. Edwards, nee Elizabeth Todd, was a Lexington, Kentucky, girl. Her father, Robert S. Todd, was part owner of a woolen factory; he owned a mill, also plantations; was a State official; and was president of a bank. One of Mrs. Edwards' sister came to Springfield to visit, and remained to marry a local doctor. John T. Stuart and Stephen T. Logan, their cousins, were among the most prominent citizens of Springfield. The Edwardses, their relatives, and some of their closest friends, were the social elite of the capital—a substantial, progressive, ambitious, and proud little group. In the fall of 1839, another sister, Mary Todd, came to live at the Edwards home; and Mr. Lincoln was soon the favorite of several suitors. Mary Todd was plump, had attractive features, sparkling eyes, and a wealth of chestnut hair. She was well educated, speaking French fluently. She was vivacious, quick at repartee, ambitious, proud, impulsive, and high-tempered. (Barton (a), i, 250; (d), 220-227; Tarbell (b), i, 172; Beveridge, i, 178, 307-308; Whitney (b), i, 161; Morrow, 59-64; Helm, 31, 45-62, 93, 106, 150)

If the opinion held by many psychologists and by most editors of love-lore columns that "opposites attract" is correct, Abraham Lincoln and Mary Todd should have been drawn together by an almost irresistible force. He was tall, she short; she was aristocratic, he democratic; he was slow to act, she quick and impulsive; she was proud—sometimes almost to arrogance, he was humble—occasionally approaching abasement; he was patient and long-suffering, she was all fire and



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accustomed zeal, and with even more than his accustomed ability. John Calhoun (of Kansas notoriety), then regarded as one of the ablest debaters on the Democratic side in the State, was an elector at large on the ticket of his party. The meetings between these gentlemen in different parts of the State will not soon be forgotten by those who witnessed them. Calhoun exerted himself as he never had done before. Not even Douglas, in his palmiest days, ever bore aloft the Democratic standard more gallant, or brought more strength of intellect to the defense of its principles. But it was only the endeavor of a pigmy against an intellectual giant. His arguments were torn to tatters by Lincoln, his premises were left without foundation, and he had only the one resource of the demagogue left—to raise the party cry, and to urge the faithful to a union of effort. The issues of that day made the discussion of the tariff a prominent part of every political speech. It is believed by the most intelligent of Mr. Lincoln's hearers, that the doctrine of a tariff for the protection of home industry has never received, in this country, a more exhaustive exposition, and a more triumphant vindication than in his speeches during that canvass. It is to be regretted that the newspaper enterprise of Illinois, at that day, did not embrace among its objects verbatim reports of public speeches. There is no trace of these efforts of Mr. Lincoln remaining, save in the recollection of those who were present at their delivery.

Before the close of the campaign, Mr. Lincoln accepted the earnest and oft-repeated invitation of leading whigs in Indiana to visit that State. The result of the August election had demonstrated that Mr. Clay could not carry Illinois, while Indiana was considered debatable ground. The efforts of Mr. Lincoln—continuing through several weeks, and until the day of election—gave unbounded satisfaction to his political friends in Indiana, thousands of whom flocked to hear him at every appointment.

tow; she enjoyed luxuries, he often seemed indifferent to even the comforts of life; she loved show, he cared nothing for appearance; he was not acquisitive, she was thrifty almost to a fault. Rankin was probably right when he said that they "supplemented each other," and that they finally came to understand each other's needs as no one else ever could. The few letters of which we know that passed between them in later years clearly indicate their affection and thorough understanding, and the respect, confidence, and trust that each felt for the other. (Rankin (b), 181; Whitney (a), 98; Helm, 84, 214-215, 234, 239, 248-249; Barton (d), 286; Stoddard, 34-63; Beveridge, i, 437-439, 450-451; Nicolay & Hay, ii, 382, 418, 517, 536, 540, 569, 575)

During her last years, Mrs. Lincoln suffered from a cerebral tumor which caused her to act erratically and finally led to her death. However, her work had been accomplished when he passed into the ages. For over twenty years—while he was toiling painfully, sometimes dejectedly, towards immortality—she had ministered to his comfort, cheered him in adversity, sympathized with him in defeat, rejoiced with him in victory, and, all the while, had been his greatest inspiration. (Herndon, 434-435; Whitney (a), 101; Barton (d), 367)

Henry B. Rankin's mother was the daughter of Matthew Rogers, with whose family Mr. Lincoln was intimate during both Lincoln's New Salem days and the subsequent years. While a farmboy living near Petersburg, just previous to the Civil War, young Rankin borrowed many books from the Lincoln & Herndon office, sometimes walking the sixteen miles between it and his home to make exchanges; he spent some time in their office as a student; and he was often in both the Lincoln and the Herndon homes. Because the statements in Rankin's books regarding the domestic life of the Lincolns are based upon his own observations, they are especially valuable. Many of the statements that he made, and the conclusions to which he arrived, have since been verified by the researches of trained and skillful biographers. (Rankin (b), 7, 63-68; Letters from members of the Rankin and Herndon families)

Probably the best and most complete character sketch of Mrs. Lincoln that we have is the one to be found in *The Women That Lincoln Loved* by William E. Barton. Perhaps nowhere else has Dr. Barton's skill in evaluating conflicting testimony been more clearly shown.



## CHAPTER VI.

### IN CONGRESS.

Unanimously nominated for Congress—His opponent, Peter Cartwright—Unprecedented Majority—Enters Congress—A Brilliant Array of Great Names—A Consistent Whig Record—The Mexican War—Lincoln votes for all the Supply Bills—Proofs from the Record—The Position of the Whig Party in relation to the Mexican War—Ashmun's Resolution—Present Leaders of the Democracy on the Mexican War—Slavery in the District of Columbia.

In 1846 Mr. Lincoln received the unanimous nomination for Congress by the Whig Convention for the Springfield District. In 1844 the district had given a majority of 914 to Mr. Clay, and the Democracy expected, in the Congressional election of 1846, to greatly lessen, if not entirely overcome, this majority. With the hope of securing the latter result, they put in nomination Rev. Peter Cartwright, the famous Methodist preacher, a man of great popularity with the people generally, and especially with his own denomination, which embraced a very large and influential portion of the population of the district. Mr. Lincoln spoke in the principal towns in the district, on the political issues of the day. His opponent did not meet him in discussion, but chose his own peculiar way of electioneering. The canvass resulted in the election of Mr. Lincoln by a majority of 1,511—a majority unprecedented in the district, and conclusive as to the estimation in which he was held by his immediate neighbors.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Lincoln took his seat in the National House of Representatives on the 7th of December, 1847—the beginning of the first session of the Thirtieth Congress. He met there such men as John Quincy Adams, George Ashmun, Jacob Collamer, John M. Botts, Washington Hunt, J. R. Ingersoll, T. Butler King, Henry W. Hilliard, George P. Marsh, Charles S. Morehead, Meredith P. Gentry, James Pollock, Caleb B. Smith, Truman Smith, Robert C. Schenck, Alexander H. Stephens, John B. Thompson, Robert Toombs, Samuel F. Vinton, and other prominent Whig leaders; and although a new man in Congress, and comparatively young, he at once took a prominent position among this brilliant array of distinguished men. Throughout his Congressional career, his record is that of a consistent Whig. On all the issues that divided parties which were brought before Congress for action, his name will be found recorded on the same side on which Clay and Webster had so often before recorded theirs.

<sup>1</sup> John J. Hardin, Edward D. Baker, Lincoln, and Judge Logan all wanted to go to Congress. To succeed, any one of them must have the support of all; so they arrived at an informal understanding that each should have his turn. Each of the first three, after his election, would have liked to continue in office; but making a virtue out of a political necessity, all loyally supported the next in succession. Hardin served a term; Baker followed; then, on May 1, 1848, Mr. Lincoln received the nomination. A few days later, war was declared against Mexico. The imagination of the people had already been fired by stories of the Alamo, Goliad, and San Jacinto; Illinois was soon ablaze with the martial spirit. Three thousand of the best young men in the State immediately volunteered. They were formed into regiments commanded by Colonels Hardin, Bissell, and Foreman. Forty additional companies begged to be taken. Without resigning his seat in Congress, Baker obtained permission to raise another regiment; and enough men to fill it were waiting for him when he reached Springfield. Both Lincoln and his opponent, the Reverend Peter Cartwright, supported the war; at least, neither said anything in opposition to it. They held the same beliefs regarding slavery. No other important questions divided them. Cartwright attacked Lincoln chiefly on personal and religious grounds. Lincoln said little about his rival, and was triumphantly elected. (Beveridge, i, 371-383; Herndon, 271-273; Tarbell (a), 266-269; Bonham, 161; Davidson & Struve, 524-525; Rankin (b), 321-327)

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A great deal has been said by his political opponents in regard to his action on the subject of the Mexican War; and in the canvass of 1858 with Mr. Douglas, that gentleman and his newspaper organs made a very disingenuous but characteristic attempt to fasten upon Mr. Lincoln a charge of having voted against supplies for the American Army in Mexico. The charge was without foundation in fact, and utterly untrue in every particular.

When Mr. Lincoln took his seat in Congress, Gen. Scott had been nearly three months in possession of the city of Mexico. All the great battles of that war had been fought, and the negotiations which resulted in the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo on the 2d of February, 1848, had progressed very far towards a favorable conclusion. The American Army, however, was still in Mexico; and various supply measures, resolutions of thanks, acts for extra pay, and for the relief of the widows and orphans of officers and soldiers who had fallen in the war, were brought before the Thirtieth Congress, and passed. *Mr. Lincoln voted in favor of every measure of this kind which came before Congress.* A careful examination of the Journals and the *Congressional Globe* discloses the fact that fourteen Acts and eight Joint Resolutions of the character referred to, were passed by this Congress. Of these, three Acts and two Joint Resolutions were passed under a call for the Ayes and Nays; the remainder without. We have the assurance of those who served in Congress with Mr. Lincoln—both his political friends and opponents—that he voted in favor of all the latter; while as to the former, the House Journal contains the proof.

The first of these Acts which passed the House by Ayes and Nays, will be found in U. S. Statutes at Large, page 215, chap. 23, being "An Act further to supply deficiencies in the Appropriations for the Service of the Fiscal Year ending the thirtieth of June, eighteen hundred and forty-eight;" and it appropriates, among other items, various sums distinctly for the benefit of volunteers in the Mexican War, amounting to \$7,508,939.74. Mr. Lincoln's name is recorded in the affirmative. (See House Journal, 1st Sess. 30th Congress, page 520-1.)

The next Act, will be found in the Statutes at Large, Page 217, chap. 26, being "An Act to authorize a loan not to exceed the sum of sixteen millions of dollars." This act was passed to provide money to meet appropriations in general, including those for the Mexican War, and would not have been necessary but for that war. Mr. Lincoln's name stands recorded in the affirmative. (See House Journal, pages 426-7.)

The last Act of this character passed by Ayes and Nays, will be found in Stat. at Large, page 247, chap. 104, being "An Act to amend an Act, entitled 'An Act supplemental to An Act entitled An Act providing for the prosecution of the existing war between the United States and the Republic of Mexico, and for other purposes.'" This Act, among other things, provided for giving three months extra pay to officers, non-commissioned officers, musicians and privates, engaged in the Mexican war, and to their relations, in case of their dying in the service. Mr. Lincoln's name is recorded in favor of this Act. (See House Journal, page 768.)

The two Joint Resolutions spoken of will be found in Stat. at Large, pages 333 and 334. They were expressive of the thanks of Congress to

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Major-General Winfield Scott and Major-General Zachery Taylor, and to the troops under their command respectively, for their distinguished gallantry and good conduct in the Mexican campaign of 1847. Mr. Lincoln's name is recorded in favor of both resolutions. (See House Journal, pages 365-6.)

These are the only instances that occurred while Mr. Lincoln was in Congress in which supplies, extra pay, or thanks were voted or proposed, under a call of the Ayes and Nays, for the American Army in Mexico; and in each case he is recorded in the affirmative.

Mr. Lincoln held, in common with the entire Whig party of that day, that the war with Mexico was unnecessarily and unconstitutionally begun; and all who desire to know the reasons on which the Whig party based this opinion, will find them most ably set forth in a speech delivered in Congress by Mr. Lincoln, Jan. 12, 1848; and which may be found in the Appendix to the *Congressional Globe*, 1st session, 30th Congress, beginning at page 93. Previous to the delivery of that speech, Mr. Lincoln had intentionally refrained from taking exceptions publicly to what he honestly believed to be the unjustifiable conduct of President Polk in precipitating the country into a war with Mexico. The following extract from the speech contains the reasons which, in his judgment, demanded a departure from this line of policy:

"When the war began, it was my opinion that all those who, because of knowing too *little*, or because of knowing too *much*, could not conscientiously approve the conduct of the President (in the beginning of it), should, nevertheless, as good citizens and patriots, remain silent on that point, at least till the war should be ended. Some leading Democrats, including ex-President Van Buren, have taken this same view, as I understand them; and I adhered to it, and acted upon it, until since I took my seat here; and I think I should still adhere to it, were it not that the President and his friends will not allow it to be so. Besides the continual effort of the President to *argue every* silent vote given for supplies into an indorsement of the justice and wisdom of his conduct; besides that singularly candid paragraph in his late message, in which he tells us that Congress, with great unanimity (only two in the Senate and fourteen in the House dissenting) had declared that 'by the act of the Republic of Mexico a state of war exists between that Government and the United States,' when the same journals that informed him of this, also informed him that, when that declaration stood disconnected from the question of supplies, sixty-seven in the House, and not fourteen, merely, voted against it; besides this open attempt to prove by telling the *truth*, what he could not prove by telling the *whole truth*,—demanding of all who will not submit to be misrepresented, in justice to themselves, to speak out; besides all this, one of my colleagues [Mr. Richardson], at a very early day in the session, brought in a set of resolutions, expressly indorsing the original justice of the war on the part of the President. Upon these resolutions, when they shall be put on their passage, I shall be *compelled* to vote; so that I cannot be silent if I would."

As before observed, Mr. Lincoln did not stand alone in holding these views. They were held substantially by the entire Whig party, both at the North and the South; as well as by Mr. Calhoun and those Southern men who at that time had adopted his peculiar political opinions. The following, from the House Journal, 1st session 30th Congress, pages 183-4 (January 3d, 1848), shows the position of the Whig party on the subject:

"In pursuance of previous notice, Mr. John W. Houston asked, and obtained leave, and introduced a joint resolution of thanks to Major-General Taylor; and which was read a first and second time; when



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"Mr. Schenck moved that the said resolution be referred to the Committee on Military Affairs.

"Mr. Henly moved to amend the said motion of Mr. Schenck by adding thereto the following: With instructions to insert in the said resolution the following: *'Engaged as they were, in defending the rights and honor of the country.'*

"Mr. Ashmun moved to amend the said proposed instructions by adding at the end of the same: *'In a war unnecessarily and unconstitutionally begun by the President of the United States.'*

"And the question was put, Will the House agree to the amendment offered by Mr. Ashmun?

"And decided in the affirmative—Yeas 82; Nays 81.

"The yeas and nays being desired by one-fifth of the members present.

"Those who voted in the affirmative are—

"Mr. John Quincy Adams, George Ashmun, Daniel M. Barringer, Washington Barrow, Hiram Belcher, John M. Botts, Jasper E. Brady, Aylett Buckner, Richard S. Canby, Thomas L. Clingman, William M. Cocke, Jacob Collamer, Harmon S. Conger, Robert B. Cranston, John Crowell, John H. Crozier, John Dickey, James Dixon, Richard S. Donnell, William Duer, Daniel Duncan, Garnett Duncan, George G. Dunn, George N. Eckert, Thomas O. Edwards, Alexander Evans, Nathan Evans, David Fisher, Andrew S. Fulton, John Gayle, Meredith P. Gentry, Joshua R. Giddings, William L. Goggin, Joseph Grinnell, Artemas Hale, Nathan K. Hall, James G. Hampton, William T. Haskell, William Henry, John W. Houston, Samuel D. Hubbard, Charles Hudson, Alexander Irvin, Orlando Kellogg, T. Butler King, Daniel P. King, Abraham Lincoln, Abraham R. McIlvane, George P. Marsh, Dudley Marvin, Joseph Mullin, Henry Nes, William A. Newell, William R. Preston, Harvey Putnam, Gideon Reynolds, Julius Rockwell, John A. Rockwell, Joseph M. Root, David Rumsey, Jr., Daniel B. St. John, Robert C. Schenck, Augustine H. Shepperd, Eliakim Sherrill, John I. Slingerland, Caleb B. Smith, Truman Smith, Alexander H. Stephens, Andrew Stewart, John Strohm, Peter H. Sylvester, Bannon G. Thibodeaux, John L. Taylor, Patrick W. Tompkins, Richard W. Thompson, John B. Thompson, Robert Toombs, Amos Tuck, John Van Dyke, Samuel F. Vinton, Cornelius Warren, Warren Wilson."

It will be seen, by inspection of the foregoing names, that some of the most distinguished leaders of the Democracy of the present day voted with Mr. Lincoln. It will also be seen that, while the resolution censured the President for the manner in which he began the war, it also conveyed the thanks of Congress to the officers and soldiers of the American army, for their gallant defense of the rights and honor of the country.

Mr. Lincoln's reasons for the opinion expressed by this vote, as subsequently stated in his speech on the war, were briefly, that the President had sent Gen. Taylor into an inhabited part of the country belonging to Mexico, and thereby had provoked the first act of hostility; that the place at which these hostilities were provoked, being the country bordering on the east bank of the Rio Grande, was inhabited by native Mexicans, born there under the Mexican government, and had never submitted to, nor been conquered by, Texas or the United States, nor transferred to either by treaty; that although Texas claimed the Rio Grande as her boundary, Mexico had never recognized it, the people on the ground had never recognized it, and neither Texas nor the United States had ever enforced it; that there was a broad desert between that and the country over which Texas had actual control; that the country where hostilities commenced having once belonged to Mexico, must remain so, until it was somehow legally transferred, which had never been done. Mr. Lincoln thought the act of sending an armed force among the Mexicans was *unnecessary*,

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inasmuch as Mexico was in no way molesting or menacing the United States or the people thereof, and that it was *unconstitutional*, because the power of levying war was vested in Congress, and not in the President. He thought the principal motive for the act was to divert public attention from the surrender, by the Democratic party, of "Fifty-four forty, or fight," to Great Britain, on the Oregon boundary question. He also, doubtless, believed that it was an intentional bid of the Democratic party for Southern support, inasmuch as the conquest of all or any portion of Mexico would be hailed by the South as an assurance of the extension of slavery, and an increase of the political power, in the federal government, of the slaveholding interest.

The adoption of Ashmun's amendment was not the first occasion the Whig party, through its representatives in Congress, had condemned the act of the President in involving the country in a war with Mexico. On the 11th of May, 1846, as will be seen by reference to the House Journal, pp. 792-3, the following action was had :

"On motion to amend a bill for an act providing for the prosecution of the existing war between the United States and the Republic of Mexico, by inserting the following preamble :

"Whereas, by the act of the Republic of Mexico, a state of war exists between that Government and the United States—"

"It was decided in the affirmative—yeas, 123, noes 67."

The Northern Whigs voted solidly in the negative, as well as the following Southern members :

"Daniel M. Barringer (N.C.), Thomas H. Bayly (Va.), Henry Bedinger (Va.) Armisted Burt (S.C.), John H. Crozier (Tenn.), Garrett Davis (Ky.), Alfred Dockery (N.C.), Henry Grider (Ky.), Henry W. Hillard (Ala.), Isaac E. Holmes (S.C.), John W. Houston (Del.), Edmund W. Hubbard (Va.), Robert T. M. Hunter (Va.), T. Butler King (Ga.), John H. McHenry (Ky.), John S. Pendleton (Va.), R. Barnwell Rhett (S.C.), James A. Seddon (Va.), Alexander D. Sims (S.C.), Richard F. Simpson (S.C.), Alexander H. Stephens (Ga.), Robert Toombs (Ga.), Joseph A. Woodward (S.C.), William L. Yancey (Ala.)"

It will be seen that the above list includes a number of the most prominent of the leaders of modern Democracy. Like Mr. Lincoln, they believed the war to have been "unnecessarily and unconstitutionally begun ;" but like him, they also discriminated between the honor of the country and the gallant services of the American troops on the one hand, and the act of the President on the other. This point was brought out very clearly by Mr. Lincoln in a speech delivered in the House of Representatives, July 27th, 1848, of which the following is an extract :

"The declaration that we have always opposed the war is true or false accordingly as we may understand the term, 'opposing the war.' If to say, 'the war was unnecessarily and unconstitutionally commenced by the President,' be opposing the war, then the Whigs have very generally opposed it. Whenever they have spoken at all, they have said this; and they have said it on what has appeared good reason to them. The marching an army into the midst of a peaceful Mexican settlement, frightening the inhabitants away, leaving their growing crops and other property to destruction, to *you* may appear a perfectly amiable, unprovoking procedure; but it does not appear so to *us*. So to call such an act, to *us* appears no other than a naked, impudent absurdity, and we speak of it accordingly. But if, when the war had begun, and had become the cause of the country, the giving of our money and our blood, in



common with yours, was support of the war, then it is not true that we have always opposed the war. With few individual exceptions, you have constantly had our votes here for all the necessary supplies. And, more than this, you have had the services, and the lives of our political brethren in every trial, and on every field. The beardless boy and the mature man—the humble and the distinguished—you have had them. Through suffering and death—by disease and in battle—they have endured, and fought, and fallen with you. Clay and Webster each gave a son, never to be returned. From the State of my own residence, besides other worthy but less-known Whig names, we sent Marshall, Morrison, Baker, and Hardin; they all fought, and one fell; and in the fall of that one we lost our best Whig man. Nor were the Whigs few in number, or laggard in the day of danger. In that fearful, bloody, breathless struggle at Buena Vista, where each man's hard task was to beat back five foes, or die himself, of the five high officers who perished, four were Whigs.

"In speaking of this, I mean no odious comparison between the lion-hearted Whigs and Democrats who fought there. On other occasions, and among the lower officers and privates on *that* occasion, I doubt not the proportion was different. I wish to do justice to all. I think of all those brave men as Americans, in whose proud fame, as an American, I too have a share. Many of them, Whigs and Democrats, are my constituents and personal friends; and I thank them—more than thank them—one and all for the high, imperishable honor they have conferred on our common State.

"But the distinction between the cause of the *President* in beginning the war, and the cause of the *country* after it was begun, is a distinction which you can not perceive. To *you* the President and the country seem to be all one. You are interested to see no distinction between them, and I venture to suggest that *possibly* your interest blinds you a little. We see the distinction, as we think, clearly enough; and our friends who have fought in the war have no difficulty in seeing it also. What those who have fallen would say, were they alive and here, of course we can never know; but with those who have returned there is no difficulty. Colonel Haskell and Major Gaines, members here, both fought in the war, and one of them underwent extraordinary perils and hardships; still they, like all other Whigs, here, vote on the record that the war was unnecessarily and unconstitutionally commenced by the President. And even General Taylor himself, the noblest Roman of them all, has declared that, as a citizen, and particularly as a soldier, it is sufficient for him to know that his country is at war with a foreign nation, to do all in his power to bring it to a speedy and honorable termination by the most vigorous and energetic operations, without inquiring about its justice, or anything else connected with it."

The Thirtieth Congress was made famous by the introduction and discussion of the Wilmot Proviso. Mr. Lincoln supported this measure from first to last, being then as now, uncompromisingly opposed to the extension of slavery into free territory. He is also on record in favor of the improvement of rivers and harbors, and the appropriation of public lands in aid of great and important public improvements. The subject of slavery in the District of Columbia was also before the Thirtieth Congress. Mr. Lincoln prepared and submitted a bill embodying his views on that subject, which is here presented to the reader. The bill is entitled, "A Bill to abolish Slavery in the District of Columbia, by consent of the free white people of said District, and with compensation to owners," and may be found in the *Congressional Globe*, vol. 20, page 212, as follows:

"SEC. 1. *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States in Congress assembled*, That no person not now within the District of Columbia nor now owned by any person or persons now resident within it, nor hereafter born within it, shall ever be held in slavery within said District.

"§ 2. That no person now within said District, or now owned by any person or persons now resident within the same, or hereafter born within it, shall ever be held in slavery without the limits of said District: *Provided*, That officers of the Government of the United States, being citizens of the slaveholding States, coming into said District on public business, and remaining only so long as may be reasonably necessary for that object, may be attended into and out of said District, and while there, by the



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necessary servants of themselves and their families, without their right to hold such servants in service being thereby impaired.

"§ 3. That all children born of slave mothers, within said District, on or after the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and fifty shall be free; but shall be reasonably supported and educated by the respective owners of their mothers, or by their heirs or representatives, and shall owe reasonable service, as apprentices, to such owners, heirs and representatives, until they respectively arrive at the age of — years, when they shall be entirely free. And the municipal authorities of Washington and Georgetown, within their respective jurisdictional limits, are hereby empowered and required to make all suitable and necessary provisions for enforcing obedience to this section, on the part of both masters and apprentices.

"§ 4. That all persons now within said District lawfully held as slaves, or now owned by any person or persons now resident within said District, shall remain such at the will of their respective owners, their heirs and legal representatives: *Provided*, That any such owner, or his legal representatives, may at any time receive from the treasury of the United States the full value of his or her slave of the class in this section mentioned; upon which such slave shall be forthwith and forever free; *And provided further*, That the President of the United States, the Secretary of State, and the Secretary of the Treasury, shall be a board for determining the value of such slaves as their owners may desire to emancipate under this section, and whose duty it shall be to hold a session for the purpose on the first Monday of each calendar month; to receive all applications, and, on satisfactory evidence in each case that the person presented for valuation is a slave, and of the class in this section mentioned, and is owned by the applicant, shall value such slave at his or her full cash value, and give to the applicant an order on the treasury for the amount, and also to such slaves a certificate of freedom.

"§ 5. That the municipal authorities of Washington and Georgetown, within their respective jurisdictional limits, are hereby empowered and required to provide active and efficient means to arrest and deliver up to their owners all fugitive slaves escaping into said District.

"§ 6. That the election officers within said District of Columbia are hereby empowered and required to open polls at all the usual places of holding elections on the first Monday of April next, and receive the vote of every free white male citizen above the age of twenty-one years, having resided within said District for the period of one year or more next preceding the time of such voting for or against this act, to proceed in taking said votes in all respects not herein specified, as at elections under the municipal laws, and with as little delay as possible to transmit correct statements of the votes so cast to the President of the United States; and it shall be the duty of the President to canvass said votes immediately, and if a majority of them be found to be for this act, to forthwith issue his proclamation giving notice of the fact; and this act shall only be in full force and effect on and after the day of such proclamation.

"§ 7. That involuntary servitude for the punishment of crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall in nowise be prohibited by this act.

"§ 8. That for all the purposes of this act, the jurisdictional limits of Washington are extended to all parts of the District of Columbia not now included within the present limits of Georgetown."

In submitting this proposition, Mr. Lincoln stated that it had the approval of a number of the leading citizens of the District. Among them, it is understood, were Messrs. Gales and Seaton, of the *National Intelligencer*, the latter of whom was then Mayor of the city of Washington.

These views were not new with Mr. Lincoln. As early as in 1837, while a member of the State Legislature, he had given them expression in the following protest which was entered on the House Journal:

March 3d, 1837.

"The following protest was presented to the House, which was read and ordered to be spread on the journals, to-wit:

"Resolutions upon the subject of domestic slavery having passed both branches of the General Assembly at its present session, the undersigned hereby protest against the passage of the same.

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"They believe that the institution of slavery is founded on both injustice and bad policy; but that the promulgation of abolition doctrines tends rather to increase than abate its evils.

"They believe that the Congress of the United States has no power, under the Constitution, to interfere with the institution of slavery in the different States.

"They believe that the Congress of the United States has the power under the Constitution, to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia; but that that power ought not to be exercised unless at the request of the people of said District.

"The difference between these opinions and those contained in the said resolutions, is their reason for entering this protest.

DAN STONE,  
A. LINCOLN,

*Representatives from the county of Sangamon."*

That his opinions on this subject have undergone no change is evident from his reply to an interrogatory of Mr. Douglas at the Freeport debate, in 1858, as to whether he (Lincoln) did not stand pledged to the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia. Mr. Lincoln said he was not so pledged, and added:

"In relation to that, I have my mind very distinctly made up. I should be exceedingly glad to see slavery abolished in the District of Columbia. I believe that Congress possesses the constitutional power to abolish it. Yet as a member of Congress, I should not, with my present views, be in favor of endeavoring to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia, unless it would be upon these conditions: First, that the abolition should be gradual; second, that it should be on a vote of the majority of qualified voters in the District; and third, that compensation should be made to unwilling owners. With these three conditions, I confess I would be exceedingly glad to see Congress abolish slavery in the District of Columbia, and, in the language of Henry Clay, 'sweep from our Capital that foul blot upon our nation'."

## CHAPTER VII.

Reason for Retiring from Congress—The Canvass of 1852—Repeal of the Missouri Compromise—Again in Politics—Encounters with Douglas—Retreat of the "Little Giant"—An Opposition Legislature—Election of U. S. Senator—Magnanimous conduct of Mr. Lincoln—Organization of the Republican Party in Illinois—Speech of 1857.

Mr. Lincoln was not a candidate for re-election to Congress. This was determined upon and publicly declared before he went to Washington, in accordance with an understanding among leading Whigs of the district, and by virtue of which Col. John J. Hardin and Col. E. D. Baker had each previously served a single term from the same district. After the adjournment he spoke several times, by invitation, in advocacy of the election of Gen. Taylor, both in Maryland and Massachusetts; and on his return to Illinois, he canvassed his own district very thoroughly, which was followed by a majority in the district of over 1500 for the Whig electoral ticket.<sup>1</sup>

After the Presidential election in 1848, Mr. Lincoln applied himself more closely than ever to the practice of his profession. In 1852 he was again placed by his Whig friends upon the Scott electoral ticket; but his professional engagements, together with the utter hopelessness of the cause in Illinois, deterred him from making as active and thorough a canvass of the State as he had done on former like occasions. In 1854 his profession had almost superseded all thought of politics. He had abandoned all political aspirations, content, as it seemed, with the honors which his profession brought him. The country was once more free from excite-

<sup>1</sup> Before the Congress to which Mr. Lincoln had been elected was convened, December 6, 1847, some of the Whigs had lost much of their enthusiasm for the war. They suspected that the fight had been forced upon Mexico for the purpose of adding more slave territory to the South. But most of the Illinois people believed that their patriotic duty required them to support the Polk administration without any reservations. Shields had been severely wounded; the beloved Hardin had fallen; nearly every neighborhood had lost a popular son. The sentiment of a great majority of the Illinois people, regardless of party, was that of Decatur; "Our Country! In her intercourse with foreign nations may she ever be right; but our country, right or wrong." (Rhodes, i, 90-91; Blaine, i, 63-65)

The national Whig party was in favor of a protective tariff; it also favored a system of internal improvements. These must be won in the next campaign, if at all. The time had come to prepare campaign material; and the leadership of the party was in the East, where the war was less popular than in the West. The Polk administration seemed to be most vulnerable in its contention that Mexico had begun the war by shedding American blood on American soil. The question whether the first American blood was lost on American soil, or during an engagement while the American troops were invaders of Mexico, depended upon what was the western boundary of Texas. Texas claimed that her western boundary was the Rio Grande; Mexico insisted that it was the Neucos. Because he was a good party-man and anxious to distinguish himself, Mr. Lincoln jumped into the fight with more enthusiasm than discretion—as the sequel proved. Soon after taking his seat, he introduced his famous "Spot Resolutions." Then on January 12, 1848, he spoke at length in support of a resolution which declared that "the war with Mexico was unnecessary and constitutionally commenced by the President." (Herndon, 277,279; Beveridge, i, 408-418, 424-427, 442; Blaine, i, 62-64; Rhodes, i, 87; Nicolay & Hay, i, 97-98, 100-107)

On February 2, 1848, a peace treaty was signed. The United States had won every battle, and now received the session of a large territory, including California. At the last minute, the Whig party executed a 'bout face and nominated General Taylor, a war hero, as its candidate for President. To avoid taking a position that was not popular in many sections, and yet not publicly eat their own words, the Whigs adopted no platform and issued no address—General Taylor was to be their platform and address. Mr. Lincoln helped with all this, and gloated over the success of the strategy. (Rhodes, i, 99; Beveridge, i, 442; Nicolay & Hay, i, 122)

The congressional election was held in Illinois in August. Two years earlier, as a Whig candidate, Mr. Lincoln had won the election by a majority of 1,511 votes. Logan, who indorsed Lincoln's war record, running as his successor against an ex-soldier, was defeated by 106. Only three months later, Taylor, another Whig but a war hero, carried the district by 673 votes. The distinction which Lincoln had drawn between voting pay and supplies for the soldiers, and admitting the justice and righteousness of the war, was too fine for many of the voters; and attacks upon him because of his Mexican War record did not cease until after the campaign of 1860. (Beveridge, i, 383, 463; Nicolay & Hay, i, 409)



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ment. The agitation which grew out of the acquisition of territory from Mexico had been quieted by the compromise measures of 1850. Each of the political parties had expressed a determination, in national convention, to abide by that settlement of the slavery question. The status of all our unsettled territory was now fixed by law, so far as this subject was concerned. Sectional jealousies were obliterated, sectional strife healed, and control and repose marked our enviable condition. From this peaceful and happy state the country was suddenly and unexpectedly aroused as "by the sound of a fire bell at night," by the introduction of a bill into the United States Senate for the repeal of the Missouri Compromise. What followed is painfully fresh in the public recollection. The country was convulsed as it never had been before, and wise men clearly foresaw the evils that have since come upon us, and from which we have not yet recovered.<sup>1</sup>

The repeal of this time-honored compact aroused Mr. Lincoln as he never had been before. He at once perceived the conflicts that must grow out of it; the angry strife between the North and the South, and the struggles in Kansas. He saw in the Kansas-Nebraska Bill a wide departure from the mode pursued by the fathers of dealing with slavery—that while the policy of the latter was based upon a recognition of its wrongfulness, the Nebraska Bill proceeded upon the opposite hypothesis, that it is not wrong. He saw, and he foretold, before the Supreme Court had decided the Dred Scott case, that the judiciary would not be slow to indorse the doctrine of Congress and the President, and that thus each of the co-ordinate branches of the federal government would stand committed against the early belief that slavery is wrong, as well as against the early policy based upon that belief. Not only did he regard the Nebraska Bill, therefore, as inaugurating a complete revolution in the policy of the government, but as artfully designed to lay the foundation for a revolution in the moral sentiment of the country, preparatory to the establishment of slavery in the free States as well as in the Territories, and the revival of the African slave trade.

On his return to Illinois, after the passage of his Kansas-Nebraska bill, Mr. Douglas saw the mischief which that measure had wrought in the ranks of his party in his own State, and forthwith undertook to repair it. A Legislature was to be elected in November of that year, on which would devolve the duty of electing a successor to Gen. Shields in the U. S. Senate. It was a matter of great importance to Mr. Douglas to secure the re-election of Gen. Shields, as his defeat would be tantamount to a censure upon himself. He commenced his labors in Chicago, where he met with anything but a flattering reception from a constituency whom he had deceived, and whose moral sense he had grossly outraged. Thence he went to Springfield, the capital of the State. He arrived there at the time the State Agricultural Society was holding its annual fair. The occasion had brought together a vast multitude of people from all parts of the State. Hundreds

<sup>1</sup> During the five years which followed Mr. Lincoln's return from Washington, he built up a large law practice; studied science, literature, and expression; read all sides of the questions then engaging the public mind; and reflected deeply regarding the problems that confronted the country. He developed from a shrewd politician, apparently mostly interested in how governmental policies would react upon his party and upon his own career, into a far-seeing statesman, almost wholly concerned regarding the effect such policies would ultimately have upon the nation and upon mankind. (Tarbell (c) 321-353; Beveridge, ii, 244-245)

of politicians had also assembled, among whom were many of the ablest men of the State. Much time was devoted to political speaking; but the great event of the occasion was the debate between Lincoln and Douglas. It had been nearly fourteen years since these gentlemen had been pitted against each other in a public discussion. In the canvass of 1840, Lincoln had proved himself more than a match for Douglas in debate. But during most of the intervening years, the latter had occupied a position either in the National House of Representatives or in the United States Senate, where he had made a national reputation, had become the recognized leader of his party, and had grown more self-confident and arrogant than ever; while the former, his party being in a minority in the State, had been in public life only a brief period, had devoted himself almost exclusively to the labors of his profession, and had no claims to a national reputation. Douglas, through his newspaper organs and street trumpeters, a class to whom no man is more greatly indebted for his reputation, had contrived to create an impression in the minds of many people that he had grown to proportions too gigantic to render it safe for so unpretending and modest a man as Lincoln to encounter him. Douglas entered upon the debate in this spirit. He displayed all of his most offensive peculiarities. He was arrogant, insolent, defiant, and throughout his speech maintained the air of one who had already conquered. On the next day, Lincoln replied. No report was made of either of the speeches; but the following extract from the *Springfield Journal* of the following day (Oct. 6th), will show how Lincoln acquitted himself, and how greatly Douglas had over-estimated his own abilities, and underrated those of his antagonist:

"Mr. Lincoln commenced at two o'clock, P. M., and spoke three hours and ten minutes. We propose to give our views and those of many Northerners and many Southerners upon the debate. We intend to give it as fairly as we can. Those who know Mr. Lincoln, know him to be a conscientious and honest man, who makes no assertions that he does not know to be true. This anti-Nebraska speech of Mr. Lincoln, was the profoundest, in our opinion, that he has made in his whole life. He felt upon his soul, the truths burn which he uttered, and all present felt that he was true to his own soul. His feelings once or twice swelled within and came near stifling utterance, and particularly so, when he said that the Declaration of Independence taught us that 'all men are created equal'—that by the laws of nature and nature's God, all men were free—that the Nebraska Law chained men, and that there was as much difference between the glorious truths of the immortal Declaration of Independence and the Nebraska Bill, as there was between God and Mammon. These are his own words. They were spoken with emphasis, feeling and true eloquence; eloquent because true, and because he felt, and felt deeply, what he said. We only wish others all over the State had seen him while uttering those truths only as Lincoln can utter a felt and deeply-felt truth. He quivered with feeling and emotion. The whole house was as still as death. He attacked the Nebraska Bill with unusual warmth and energy, and all felt that a man of strength was its enemy, and that he intended to blast it if he could, by strong and manly efforts. He was most successful, and the house approved the glorious triumph of truth by loud and continued huzzas. Women waved their white handkerchiefs in token of woman's silent but heartfelt assent. Douglas felt the sting. He frequently interrupted Mr. Lincoln. His friends felt that he was crushed by Lincoln's powerful argument, manly logic, and illustrations from nature around us. The Nebraska Bill was shivered, and, like a tree of the forest, was torn and rent asunder by the hot bolts of truth. Mr. Lincoln exhibited Douglas in all the attitudes he could be placed, in a friendly debate. He exhibited the Bill in all its aspects, to show its humbuggery and falsehoods; and when thus torn to rags, cut into slips, held up to the gaze of the vast crowd, a kind of scorn and mockery was visible upon the face of the crowd, and upon the lips of the most eloquent speaker. It was a proud day for Lincoln. His friends will never forget it.



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"Nowhere, in the whole speech of Mr. Lincoln, was he more grand than at the conclusion. He said this people were degenerating from the sires of the Revolution—from Washington, Jefferson, Madison, and Monroe, as it appeared to him; yet he called upon the spirit of the brave, valiant free sons of all and every clime, to defend freedom and the institutions that our fathers and Washington gave us; and that now was the time to show to the world that we were not rolling back towards despotism. At the conclusion of this speech, every man and child felt that it was unanswerable; that no human power could overthrow it or trample it under foot. The long and repeated applause evinced the feelings of the crowd, and gave token of universal assent to Lincoln's whole argument; and every mind present did homage to the man who took captive the heart and broke like a sun over the understanding."

The following extract is taken from an account of the same debate, given by the *Chicago Press and Tribune*:

"It would be impossible, in these limits, to give an idea of the strength of Mr. Lincoln's argument. We deemed it by far the ablest effort of the campaign—from whatever source. The occasion was a great one, and the speaker was every way equal to it. The effect produced on the listeners was magnetic. No one who was present will ever forget the power and vehemence of the following passage:

"My distinguished friend says it is an insult to the emigrants to Kansas and Nebraska to suppose they are not able to govern themselves. We must not slur over an argument of this kind because it happens to tickle the ear. It must be met and answered. I admit that the emigrant to Kansas and Nebraska is competent to govern *himself*, but,' the speaker rising to his full height, '*I deny his right to govern any other person WITHOUT THAT PERSON'S CONSENT.*' The applause which followed this triumphant refutation of a cunning falsehood, was but an earnest of the victory at the polls which followed just one month from that day.

"When Mr. Lincoln had concluded, Mr. Douglas strode hastily to the stand. As usual, he employed ten minutes in telling how grossly he had been abused. Recollecting himself, he added, 'though in a perfectly courteous manner'—abused in a perfectly courteous manner! He then devoted half an hour to showing that it was indispensably necessary to California emigrants, Sante Fe traders and others, to have organic acts provided for the Territories of Kansas and Nebraska—that being precisely the point which nobody disputed. Having established this premise to his satisfaction, Mr. Douglas launched forth into an argument wholly apart from the positions taken by Mr. Lincoln. He had about half finished at six o'clock, when an adjournment to tea was effected. The speaker insisted strenuously upon his right to resume in the evening, but we believe the second part of that speech has not been delivered to this day."

From Springfield the parties went to Peoria, where they again discussed the Kansas-Nebraska Bill.<sup>1</sup> On this occasion the triumph of Mr. Lincoln was even more marked than at Springfield. His speech occupied

<sup>1</sup> State Fair Week in Illinois was then a time when the leading politicians of all parties spoke to the people who gathered at Springfield from every part of the commonwealth. The first day of the fair in 1854, October 3, Douglas delivered an address in the hall of the House of Representatives in which he defended the policies that he had been advocating. The next day Lincoln replied. The heart and conscience of Lincoln were now fully engaged. Through several years he had given intense thought to the political problems of the times; and in the preparation of this speech, he spent several weeks in the State library, securing accurate historical data. The result was an address so convincing and eloquent that Horace White, who heard it, thought it superior to Webster's reply to Hayne. This address marks the transition of Lincoln from the politician to the statesman. Beveridge says that the change in Lincoln was so great that if his previous speeches were placed side by side with this address and those he made subsequently, a person who did not know the authorship would never suspect that they had been written by the same man. Twelve days later, Douglas was to speak at Peoria. Agreeable to the request some of the leading Whigs of the State, arrangements were made for Lincoln to reply to Douglas, on the same day and from the same platform. Douglas to have an additional hour in which to close the debate. Mr. Lincoln repeated his Springfield speech, with such additions, no doubt, as were suggested by Douglas' arguments. This address was now written out for the first time, so it is known in history as Lincoln's Peoria speech. Because it was the basis of all his subsequent utterances, including his debates with Douglas in 1858 and his Cooper Union address in 1860, it deserves the most careful study of the student. Jacob has recognized its importance by devoting to it an entire volume, written by Bryner. (Bryner, 11-304; Barton (a), i, 341-343; White, 31-34; Herndon, 367-369; Beveridge, ii, 238, 244, 267-270; Rhodes, ii, 70)



over three hours in the delivery; and so masterly was it in argument, so crushing in its sarcasm, so compact in its logic, that Mr. Douglas did not even undertake to reply to the points raised by Mr. Lincoln. It was a thorough and unanswerable exposition of all the sophisms and plausible pretences with which Douglas up to that time had invested the Kansas-Nebraska Bill, and he stood before the audience in the attitude of a mountebank, whose tricks are clearly seen through by those whom he attempts to deceive. Mr. Lincoln's speech on this occasion was reported. As a specimen of the manner in which he drove Douglas to the wall on every point, take the following extract. Douglas had urged that the question of slavery in a Territory concerned only the people of the Territory—that it could be of no interest to the people of Illinois whether slavery was "voted up or voted down" in Kansas. To this Lincoln replied that, in the first place, the whole nation is interested that the best use shall be made of all the Territories, and that this end can alone be reached by preserving them as homes for free white people. His other point was the following, and certainly a more conclusive and unanswerable argument has never been uttered:

"By the constitution, each State has two Senators—each has a number of representatives, in proportion to the number of its people—and each has a number of Presidential electors, equal to the whole number of its senators and representatives together. But in ascertaining the number of the people, for the purpose, five slaves are counted as being equal to three whites. The slaves do not vote; they are only counted and so used as to swell the influence of the white people's votes. The practical effect of this is more aptly shown by a comparison of the States of South Carolina and Maine. South Carolina has six representatives and so has Maine; South Carolina has eight Presidential electors, and so has Maine. This is precise equality so far; and of course they are equal in senators, each having two. Thus, in the control of the government, the two States are equals precisely. But how are they in the number of their white people? Maine has 581,813, while South Carolina has 274,567. Maine has twice as many as South Carolina, and 32,679 over. Thus each white man in South Carolina is more than the double of any man in Maine. This is all because South Carolina, besides her free people, has 384,984 slaves. The South Carolinian has precisely the same advantage over the white man in every other free State, as well as in Maine. He is more than the double of any one of us. The same advantage, but not to the same extent, is held by all the citizens of the slave States, over those of the free; and it is an absolute truth, without an exception, that there is no voter in any slave State, but who has more legal power in the government, than any voter in any free State. There is no instance of exact equality; and the disadvantage is against us the whole chapter through. This principle, in the aggregate, gives the slave States in the present Congress, twenty additional representatives—being seven more than the whole majority by which they passed the Nebraska Bill.

"Now all this is manifestly unfair; yet I do not mention it to complain of it, in so far as it is already settled. It is in the Constitution, and I do not, for that cause, or any other cause, propose to destroy, or alter, or disregard the Constitution; I stand to it fairly, fully, and firmly. But when I am told that I must leave it altogether to *other people* to say whether new partners are to be bred up and brought into the firm on the same degrading terms against me, I respectfully demur. I insist, that whether I shall be a whole man, or only the half of one, in comparison with others, is a question in which I am somewhat concerned; and one which no other man can have a 'sacred right' of deciding for me. If I am wrong in this—if it really be a 'sacred right' of self government, in the man who shall go to Nebraska, to decide whether he will be the equal of me or the double of me, then after he shall have exercised that right, and thereby shall have reduced me to a still smaller fraction of a man than I already am, I should like for some gentleman deeply skilled in the mysteries of 'sacred rights', to provide himself with a microscope, and peep about and find out if he can, what has become of *my* 'sacred rights'? They will surely be too small for detection with the naked eye.

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"Finally, I insist that if there is anything which it is the duty of the *whole people* to never entrust to any hands but their own, that thing is the preservation and perpetuity of their own liberties and institutions. And if they shall think, as I do, that the extension of slavery endangers them, more than any or all other causes, how recreant to themselves, if they submit the question, and with it the fate of their country, to a mere handful of men, bent only on temporary self interest! If this question of slavery extension were an insignificant one—it might be shuffled aside in this way. But being, as it is, the great Behemoth of danger, shall the strong grip of the nation be loosened upon him, to entrust him to the hands of such feeble keepers?"

It was Mr. Lincoln's purpose and desire to continue the discussion with Mr. Douglas during the remainder of the canvass, but that gentleman shrank from a repetition of the discomfiture he had suffered at Springfield and Peoria. He gave Mr. Lincoln no further opportunity of meeting him. But notwithstanding his antagonist withdrew from the unequal contest, Mr. Lincoln continued in the field. He pressed the slavery issue which the repeal of the Missouri Compromise had forced upon the country, upon the people of central and southern Illinois, who were largely made up of emigrants from Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia and North Carolina, with all the powers of his mind. He felt the force of the moral causes that must influence the final settlement of the question, and he never failed to appeal to the moral sentiment of the people in aid of the argument drawn from political sources, and to illuminate his theme with the lofty inspirations of true eloquence pleading for the rights of humanity.

A revolution swept the State. For the first time since the organization of the Democratic party, a majority of those elected to the Legislature of Illinois were opposed to the Democratic administration of the federal government. While Mr. Lincoln was engaged in the canvass in other parts of the State, his friends in Sangamon County, without his consent or knowledge, presented his name for the Legislature, and he was elected to that body by a handsome majority. It was not in his power to serve, and he was compelled to decline the well-meant honor conferred upon him by the people of Sangamon. This was Lincoln's first triumph over Douglas in an appeal to the people of the State; his second triumph occurred two years later in the election of the entire Republican State ticket; and his third was in the memorable Senatorial contest of 1858, when his majority over Douglas exceeded four thousand votes.

The Opposition in the Legislature was made up of Whigs, Americans, and Anti-Nebraska Democrats. The Republican party was not organized in Illinois until 1856—two years later. These three divisions of the opposition had no common platform, except that of hostility to the repeal of the Missouri Compromise and to the revolutionary principles of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill. The Old Whigs were still looking for a revival of their own organization—the anti-Nebraska Democrats had not abandoned the hope that the repeal of the Missouri Compromise and the principles of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill would yet be repudiated by the Democratic party. When the election of a United States Senator came on, the latter declined going into caucus with the Opposition. They had never acted politically with the Whigs as a party. To preserve their identity, to be able to exert a due influence on the Democratic party, and to force it into the abandonment of its new and dangerous dogmas, they believed sound policy

required them to nominate and adhere to one of their own number. The remainder of the Opposition went into caucus and nominated Mr. Lincoln. When the two houses met in joint session, February 8, 1855, the Whigs presented the name of Abraham Lincoln; the Anti-Nebraska Democrats that of Lyman Trumbull; the Democrats that of Gen. James Shields. The whole number of votes was 99, of which 50 were necessary to a choice. On the first ballot the vote stood, for Abraham Lincoln 45; James Shields 41; for Lyman Trumbull 5; scattering 8. On the seventh ballot the Democrats dropped Gen. Shields, and voted for Joel A. Matteson, then holding the office of Governor of the State. Gov. Matteson had never openly taken ground for or against the Kansas-Nebraska Bill. He was a shrewd man, and had long been arranging and planning for the emergency which had now occurred. On the seventh ballot (first for him) he received 44 votes, two higher than Shields had at any time received; on the eighth he received 46 votes, and on the ninth 47, or within three of an election. On that ballot, for the second time, the joint vote of Lincoln and Trumbull was just sufficient to elect, if thrown, for a single person, viz. for Trumbull 35; for Lincoln 15; and this, too, was the first time that Trumbull's vote had exceeded Lincoln's. Perceiving the danger of electing Matteson unless his own and Trumbull's strength could be united at once, Lincoln went to his friends and begged them to cast their united vote on the next ballot for Trumbull. They yielded to his urgent entreaties, and on the next ballot Mr. Trumbull received 51 votes, and was declared elected.

The scene will long be remembered by those who witnessed it. The excitement was most intense. The Democrats had never doubted their ability to elect some non-committal man like Matteson. They did not believe the Opposition could be brought to unite. They were not prepared for such a display of magnanimity as that exhibited by Mr. Lincoln. The result filled them with astonishment as well as chagrin. On the other hand, the old political associates of Mr. Lincoln felt that he was entitled to the place, and that all portions of the Opposition ought to have united in awarding it to him. Strong men wept at the necessity which required them to withdraw their votes from him. He alone was calm and unmoved, in the midst of all these different phases of excitement.

Zealous efforts have since been made to awaken unkind feelings on the part of Mr. Lincoln against Senator Trumbull and those Anti-Nebraska Democrats who brought him forward as a candidate; but all to no purpose. The relations subsisting between him and them were of the most frank and cordial character at the time, and such they have been ever since. He justly ranks them among his best friends; and surely none have gone or can go beyond them in manifestation of zeal in his behalf, both as a candidate for the Senate in 1858, and for the Presidency in 1860.

In June, 1856, a convention of those opposed to the Democratic party, was held at Bloomington, Illinois, at which time the Republican party was organized in that State, a Platform adopted, a State Ticket nominated, and delegates appointed to the National Republican Convention to meet at Philadelphia. Mr. Lincoln bore a leading part in securing these results. Perhaps no other man exerted so wide and salutary an influence in



harmonizing differences, in softening and obliterating prejudices, and bringing into a cordial union those who for years had been bitterly hostile to each other.<sup>1</sup> His speech before that Convention will ever be regarded by many of those who heard it, as the greatest effort of his life. Never was an audience more completely electrified by human eloquence. Again and again, during the progress of its delivery, they sprang to their feet and upon the benches, and testified by long-continued shouts and the waving of hats, how deeply the speaker had wrought upon their minds and hearts. It fused the mass of hitherto incongruous elements into perfect homogeneity and from that day to the present, they have worked together in harmonious and fraternal union. It kindled also an enthusiasm in the bosoms of those who heard it, which they carried home with them, and with which they imbued their neighbors, and by which the Republican party of Illinois, in the first year of its existence, was carried triumphantly into power.

At the National Republican Convention of that year, Mr. Lincoln's name was presented by the Western delegates for nomination for the Vice-Presidency. Although, had his own wishes been consulted in the matter, he would not have consented to this use of his name, it was nevertheless a well-deserved compliment, as well as a recognition of the fact that his reputation had now become national. Mr. Lincoln's vote on the informal ballot was 110—Mr. Dayton's, 259.

During the recess of Congress in 1857, Mr. Douglas made a speech at Springfield in further vindication of his Kansas-Nebraska Bill, known as his "Grand Jury Speech," from the fact that he was invited to deliver it by the Grand Jury of the U. S. District Court for Southern Illinois. In that speech, he first promulgated the doctrine that the framers of the Declaration of Independence, in asserting that "all men are created equal," simply meant to say that "British subjects on this continent were equal to British subjects born and residing in Great Britain." Mr. Lincoln, by invitation of

<sup>1</sup> From the time of the Senatorial election in 1854 until the spring of 1856, Mr. Lincoln attended to his practice; but he also thoughtfully noted the startling political events which developed, one after another. It was now plain that a majority of the voters of Illinois were opposed to the slavery-extension policy of the Democrat party. This opposition, however, was made up of elements so diverse that it was doubtful if they could be united into an effective political instrument. But a few optimists determined to try. As a first step, a convention of anti-Nebraska editors was called to meet at Decatur on February 22, 1856. From his room in a local hotel, Mr. Lincoln kept in touch with their deliberations and guided the proceedings. It was decided to hold a State convention that would be open to all voters who opposed the extension of slavery—without any regard to their past or present party affiliations. This convention, which has since been known as the Republican State Convention of 1856, met on May 29 at Major's Hall in Bloomington. Mr. Lincoln here made his famous "lost speech." It was "lost" because newspaper reporters became so interested that they forgot to take notes. And something unusual was required to fuse into one body elements that had been as antagonistic as those gathered there—Abolitionists, anti-Nebraska Democrats, Germans, Know-Nothings, Whigs, and Republicans—with all their ancient hates and present jealousies. A slate prepared principally by Lincoln was nominated. It included an anti-Nebraska Democrat, a leading German, two Know-Nothings, a Southern-Illinois Whig, but no Republicans; even the name "Republican" was not used. (Beveridge, ii, 358-359, 369-379; Tarbell (b), i, 292-299; ii, 306-321; Whitney (a), 73-78; Barton (a), i, 357-361; Harris, 197-203)

The State of Illinois extends, north and south, about 375 miles. The northern border is in the same latitude as Boston; Cairo, on the southern tip, is almost directly west of Petersburg, Virginia. The northern part of the State was settled largely by emigrants from New England and New York who traveled west by way of the Great Lakes. The central portion contained many people who had pushed their way through from Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Indiana. The southern districts were peopled largely from the Slave States. The genius Lincoln displayed, and the experience he gained, in welding and holding together such widely different elements, explain to some extent how during the war he managed to retain the support of New England Abolitionists without losing that of the slave-holding Border States, how he could be a Republican President and keep the support of so many Democrats. In Illinois in 1856, he united the most diverse elements upon opposition to Slavery Extension; in the nation during the war, he united equally diverse elements upon Union.

a large number of his fellow citizens, replied to Douglas. When he came to that part of the speech which contained his (Douglas's) theory of the Declaration, as above given, Mr. Lincoln said:—

"My good friends, read that carefully over, some leisure hour, and ponder well upon it. See what a mere wreck—a mangled ruin—it makes of our glorious Declaration!

"They were speaking of British subjects on this continent being equal to British subjects born and residing in Great Britain! Why, according to this, not only negroes, but white people outside of Great Britain and America, were not spoken of in that instrument. The English, Irish, and Scotch, along with white Americans, were included, to be sure, but the French, Germans, and other white people of the world are all gone to pot along with the Judge's inferior races.

"I had thought the Declaration promised something better than the condition of British subjects; but no, it only meant that we should be *equal* to them in their own oppressed and *unequal* condition. According to that, it gave no promise that, having kicked off the King and Lords of Great Britain, we should not at once be saddled with a King and Lords of our own.

"I had thought the Declaration contemplated a progressive improvement in the condition of all men everywhere; but no, it merely 'was adopted for the purpose of justifying the colonists in the eyes of the civilized world in withdrawing their allegiance from the British crown, and dissolving their connection with the mother country.' Why, that object having been effected some eighty years ago, the Declaration is of no practical use now—mere rubbish—old wadding left to rot on the battle-field after the victory is won.

"I understand you are preparing to celebrate the 'Fourth,' to-morrow week. What for? The doings of that day had no reference to the present; and quite half of you are not even descendants to those who were referred to at that day. But I suppose you will celebrate, and will even go so far as to read the Declaration. Suppose after you read it once in the old-fashioned way, you read it once more with Judge Douglas' version. It will then run thus: 'We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all British subjects who were on this continent eighty-one years ago, were created equal to all British subjects born and *then* residing in Great Britain.'

"And now I appeal to all—to Democrats as well as others—are you really willing that the Declaration shall thus be frittered away?—thus left no more, at most, than an interesting memorial to the dead past?—thus shorn of its vitality and practical value, and left without the *germ*, or even the *suggestion*, of the inalienable rights of man in it?"

Mr. Lincoln then gave his own views of the intention of the framers of the Declaration; and in the contrast between his theory and that of Douglas, the relative moral and philosophic status of the two men is most clearly shown. This is Mr. Lincoln's theory:—

"I think the authors of that notable instrument intended to include *all* men, but they did not intend to declare all men equal in *all* respects. They did not mean to say all were equal in color, size, intellect, moral developments, or social capacity. They defined with tolerable distinctness, in what respects they did consider all men created equal—equal in "certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." This they said, and this they meant. They did not mean to assert the obvious untruth that all were then actually enjoying that equality, nor yet that they were about to confer it immediately upon them. They meant simply to declare the *right*, so that the *enforcement* of it might follow as fast as circumstances should permit.

"*They meant to set up a standard maxim for free society, which should be familiar to all, and revered by all; constantly looked to, constantly labored for, and even though never perfectly attained, constantly approximated, and thereby constantly spreading and deepening its influence, and augmenting the happiness and value of life to all people of all colors everywhere.* The assertion that "all men are created equal," was of no practical use in affecting our separation from Great Britain; and it was placed in the Declaration, not for that, but for future use. Its authors meant it to be

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as, thank God, it is now proving itself, a stumbling-block to all those who in after times might seek to turn a free people back into the hateful paths of despotism. They knew the proneness of prosperity to breed tyrants, and they meant when such should reappear in this fair land and commence their vocation, they should find left for them at least one hard nut to crack."

Let the reader decide on which theory the heroes of the Revolution are most entitled to the veneration of posterity—on which the assertion and defense of the natural and inalienable rights of man can be most successfully maintained.



## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE SENATORIAL CONTEST WITH DOUGLAS, IN 1858.

The Democratic State Convention met at Springfield on the 21st of April, 1858, and published a declaration of the principles on which they proposed to make their battle. They resolved—

*"That the Democracy of Illinois are unalterably attached to, and will maintain inviolate, the principles declared in the National Democratic Convention at Cincinnati, in June, 1856."*

Several supplementary resolutions were adopted, all tending to the same conclusion. Senator Douglas and his Democratic colleagues in the House of Representatives were warmly indorsed, and promised the "earnest and efficient support" of the party in the coming campaign. No rebuke was offered to the Administration for its course on Lecompton, except by a misty inference. The last resolution was as follows:

*"Resolved, That in all things wherein the National Administration sustain and carry out the principles of the Democratic party, as expressed in the Cincinnati platform and affirmed in their resolutions, it is entitled to and will receive our hearty support."*

The distinct and unqualified endorsement of the Cincinnati platform by the friends of Mr. Douglas, their neglect to pass any censure on the corruptions and tergiversations of President Buchanan, and their violent speeches in the Convention against the Republicans, destroyed whatever hope of union and compromise might have been entertained by members of either party. The challenge had passed, and the Republicans were not slow in accepting it. Their State Convention was held at Springfield on the 16th of June, seven weeks later than the other. Nearly one thousand delegates and alternates were present, and the chairman of the committee on credentials reported fourteen hundred persons in attendance, other than the resident population of the capital. It was very soon ascertained that the convention was *all for Lincoln*. Immediately after the organization, a Chicago delegate brought into the hall a banner on which were inscribed the words, "COOK COUNTY FOR ABRAHAM LINCOLN." The whole Convention rose simultaneously, and gave three cheers for the candidate upon whom it was proposed to confer the perilous honor of a nomination against Senator Douglas. The precarious ground which Mr. Douglas's opposition to the Lecompton Constitution had left for a distinctive Republican candidate before the masses, was carefully considered by the committee on resolutions. The alleged sympathy entertained for him by prominent Republicans in other parts of the country; the odor of free-soil which he had collected in his garments during the recent session of Congress, notwithstanding his obstinate and blind adherence to the Dred Scott decision; the universal favor to which he had been commended by the persecutions of the Administration; the flagrant apportionment of the State into Legislative Districts, by which ninety-three thousand people in the Republican counties were virtually disfranchised,—combined to give a very unpromising complexion to the campaign. Nothing was to be done, however, but to lay down a platform of straight Republican principles and trust to their

potency, and the popularity of their leader, for a successful issue. It was agreed that any result was to be courted rather than allow the Republican party to become the tail for a kite patched together from the Cincinnati platform and the Dred Scott decision. The Convention then proceeded to the adoption of a platform of principles, and the nomination of candidates for State Treasurer and Superintendent of Public Instruction. It was not deemed advisable by the committee on resolutions to give Mr. Lincoln a formal nomination for the Senate, but many members of the convention deemed it proper to do so, in order to destroy the force of allegations, which had already been put forth by Mr. Douglas from his seat in the Senate, that the Republicans designed to elect a different man provided they were successful in securing a majority of the Legislature. The following resolution was therefore offered by a delegate, and adopted unanimously:

*"Resolved, That the Hon. Abraham Lincoln is our first and only choice for U. S. Senator, to fill the vacancy about to be created by the expiration of Mr. Douglas' term of office."*

Mr. Lincoln had been frequently called for during the session, but did not make his appearance. The Secretary of State, however, announced that, if it was the desire of his friends, he would address the members of the convention in the Representatives' Hall in the evening. About 8 o'clock, therefore, the room was filled to its utmost capacity, and Mr. Lincoln spoke about half an hour. The limits of this work do not permit the introduction of any speeches at full length, but the masterly manner in which the pending topics were discussed, the wide celebrity which this speech acquired, and more especially, the fact that it contained the *essence* of the whole campaign, require that more than a passing notice should be given to it. The exceeding terseness of all Mr. Lincoln's efforts renders it difficult to condense his utterances without impairing or destroying their force, yet the reader will be able to catch the essential points of his argument from the following summary. We quote the opening paragraph entire:

"MR. PRESIDENT, AND GENTLEMEN OF THE CONVENTION: If we could first know where we are, and whither we are tending, we could better judge what to do, and how to do it. We are now in the fifth year since a policy was initiated with the avowed object, and confident promise, of putting an end to slavery agitation. Under the operation of that policy, that agitation has not only not ceased, but has constantly augmented. In my opinion, it will not cease, until a crisis shall have been reached and passed. 'A house divided against itself cannot stand.' I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved—I do not expect the house to fall—but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing, or all the other. Either the opponents of slavery will arrest the further spread of it, and place it where the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is in the course of ultimate extinction; or its advocates will push it forward, till it shall become alike lawful in all the States, Old as well as New—North as well as South.<sup>1</sup>

"Have we no tendency to the latter condition?

"Let any one who doubts, carefully contemplate that now almost complete legal combination—piece of machinery, so to speak—compounded of the Nebraska doctrine,

<sup>1</sup> When Mr. Lincoln read this passage to Herndon in advance of its delivery, and Herndon objected to it as sounding too radical to be politic, Lincoln said: "I would rather be defeated with this expression in the speech, and uphold and discuss it before the public, than to be elected without it." (Herndon, 398)

and the Dred Scott decision. Let him consider not only what work the machinery is adapted to, and how well adapted; but also, let him study the history of its construction, and trace, if he can,—or rather fail, if he can, to trace the evidences of design and concert of action, among its chief architects, from the beginning.”

Mr. Lincoln then proceeded to show that prior to 1854 slavery had been excluded from more than half the *States* by local laws or constitutions, and from the greater portion of the national territory by congressional prohibition. On the 4th of January, 1854, the struggle commenced, which ended with the repeal of the congressional prohibition, accomplished on the grounds of squatter sovereignty, and “sacred right of self-government,” which meant that “if any *one* man chooses to enslave *another*, no *third* man shall be allowed to object.” This is shown to be a correct definition by the fact that when Mr. Chase, in the Senate, and Mr. Mace, in the House of Representatives, offered their amendments to the Kansas-Nebraska bill, declaring that the people of the territories might *exclude* slavery if they wanted to, Mr. Douglas and the other friends of the measure *voted them down*. But while the Nebraska Bill was going through Congress the Dred Scott case was going through the courts, and when Senator Trumbull asked Senator Douglas whether in his opinion the people of a territory could *exclude* slavery, the latter replied that it was “a question for the Supreme Court,”—the Nebraska Bill having provided that the rights of the people should be “subject to the Constitution of the United States.” The Nebraska Bill was passed by both branches of Congress, and received the signature of the President; the election of 1856 was carried by the Democracy, on the issue of “sacred right of self-government”; and then the Supreme Court decided, in the Dred Scott case, that neither Congress *nor a Territorial Legislature* could exclude slavery from any United States Territory. But the Dred Scott judges refused to decide whether the holding of Dred Scott in the free State of Illinois, by his master, made him a free man. One member of the Court (Judge Nelson) approached this branch of the case so nearly as to say that “except in cases where the power is restrained ‘*by the Constitution of the United States*,’ the law of the State is supreme over the subject of slavery, within its jurisdiction.” In view of this strange decision, does it not appear that the phrase, “subject to the Constitution of the United States,” in the Nebraska Bill, was interpolated for the purpose of leaving room for the Dred Scott decision? We quote again from Mr. Lincoln’s words:

“We cannot absolutely know that all these exact adaptations are the result of preconcert. But when we see a lot of framed timbers, different portions of which we know have been gotten out at different times and places and by different workmen—Stephen, Franklin, Roger, and James, for instance—and when we see these timbers joined together, and see they exactly make the frame of a house or a mill, all the tenons and mortices exactly fitting, and all the lengths and proportions of the different pieces exactly adapted to their respective places, and not a piece too many or too few—not omitting even scaffolding—or, if a single piece be lacking, we see the place in the frame exactly fitted and prepared yet to bring such piece in—in such a case, we find it impossible not to believe that Stephen and Franklin and Roger and James all understood one another from the beginning, and all worked upon a common plan or draft, drawn up before the first blow was struck.”

So far as to *Territories*. How as to *States*? Singularly enough, the Nebraska Bill said that it was “the true intent and meaning of this act not to legislate slavery into any Territory or *State*, nor to exclude it there-



from." Why was the word "State" employed? The Nebraska conspirators were legislating for *Territories*, not States. It would seem, from the ominous expression of Judge Nelson, quoted above, as though a *second* niche had been left in the Nebraska Bill, to be filled by a *second* Dred Scott decision,—possibly the decision in the Lemmon case—declaring that as no *Territory* can exclude slavery, neither can any *State*. "And," says Mr. Lincoln, "this may especially be expected if the doctrine of 'care not whether slavery be voted down or voted up,' shall gain upon the public mind sufficiently to give promise that such a decision can be maintained when made."

Such was Mr. Lincoln's admirable presentation of the issues of 1858. It is difficult to see in what point the argument is not equally good to-day.

Mr. Douglas returned to Chicago on the 9th of July, and speedily realized the expectations of the Republicans of his own State by making a speech cordially and emphatically re-indorsing the Dred Scott decision.

On the 24th of July, Mr. Lincoln addressed the following note to his antagonist:

"HON. S. A. DOUGLAS—*My Dear Sir*:—Will it be agreeable to you to make an agreement for you and myself to divide time, and address the same audiences during the present canvass? Mr. Judd, who will hand you this, is authorized to receive your answer; and, if agreeable to you, to enter into the terms of such engagement.

"Your obedient servant, A. LINCOLN."

Mr. Douglas had too vivid a recollection of his past encounters with Mr. Lincoln, to desire a repetition of them. Had he not felt in his inmost soul that Mr. Lincoln was more than a match for him in debate, he would not have waited for a challenge, but would himself have thrown down the glove to Mr. Lincoln immediately upon entering the State. His reply, declining the proposed arrangement, was quite voluminous, and presented a singular array of reasons why it would be impossible for him to meet Mr. Lincoln according to the terms of the challenge. His chief objection was that the Democratic candidates for Congress and the Legislature desired to address the people at the various county seats in conjunction with him; a pretext which, whether true or not as to the "desire," was found to be altogether untrue as to the fulfillment. Mr. Douglas, nevertheless, consented to seven meetings with his opponent for joint discussion, to wit, at Ottawa, Freeport, Jonesboro', Charleston, Galesburg, Quincy, and Alton. Mr. Lincoln, of course, promptly acceded to this arrangement. As he could not prevail upon Douglas to meet him in discussion in every part of the State, he was willing to do the next best thing—meet him wherever he could have the opportunity.

Mr. Douglas having taken no notice at Chicago, Bloomington, or Springfield, where he made preliminary speeches, of the "conspiracy" to which his attention had been called by Mr. Lincoln, in his speech of June 16th, the latter deemed it proper to take a default on him, and to dwell somewhat upon the enormity of his having "left a niche in the Nebraska Bill to receive the Dred Scott decision," which declared that a Territorial Legislature could not abolish slavery. Mr. Douglas was not slow in discovering that this charge, fortified as it was by overwhelming evidence,

had begun to *hurt*. Therefore, at Clinton, De Witt County, he took occasion to read the charge to his audience, and to say in reply that "his self-respect alone prevented him from calling it a falsehood." A few days later, the "self-respect" broke down, and at Beardstown, Cass County, he pronounced it, with much vehemence of gesture, "an infamous lie!"

Mr. Lincoln commenced his canvass of the State at Beardstown, a place of considerable importance on the Illinois River, on the 12th of August. At the conclusion of his speech on this occasion, he reviewed the conspiracy charge in a manner so forcible that it can only be told in his own language:

\* \* \* \* \*

"I say to you, gentlemen, that it would be more to the purpose of Judge Douglas to say that he did *not* repeal the Missouri Compromise; that he did *not* make slavery possible where it was impossible before; that he did *not* leave a niche in the Nebraska Bill for the Dred Scott decision to rest in; that he did *not* vote down a clause giving the people the right to exclude slavery if they wanted to; that he did *not* refuse to give his individual opinion whether a Territorial Legislature could exclude slavery; that he did *not* make a report to the Senate in which he said that the rights of the people in this regard were 'held in abeyance' and could not be immediately exercised; that he did *not* make a hasty indorsement of the Dred Scott decision over at Springfield; that he does *not* now indorse that decision; that that decision does *not* take away from the Territorial Legislature the power to exclude slavery; and that he did *not* in the original Nebraska Bill so couple the words *State* and *Territory* together, that what the Supreme Court has done in forcing open all the Territories for slavery, it may yet do in forcing open all the States—I say it would be vastly more to the point for Judge Douglas to say he did *not* do some of these things, did *not* forge some of these links of overwhelming testimony, than to go to vociferating about the country that possibly he may be obliged to hint that somebody is a liar!"

From Beardstown, Mr. Lincoln went up the Illinois River to Havana and Bath, Mason county, Lewiston and Canton, Fulton county, Peoria, Henry, Marshall county, speaking at each place, and thence to Ottawa on the 21st of August, where the first joint debate was appointed to take place. An immense audience, estimated by the friends of both parties at about twelve thousand, had congregated to witness the first grand passage-at-arms. Mr. Douglas had appointed to himself the opening and closing of the first and last of the seven discussions. Accordingly he occupied an hour in opening at Ottawa, giving Mr. Lincoln an hour and a half to reply and himself half an hour for rejoinder. The only thing of even moderate consequence presented in Mr. Douglas's first hour was a series of questions to his antagonist drawn from a series of radical anti-slavery resolutions which, he alleged, had been reported by Mr. Lincoln, as chairman of a committee, to the Republican State Convention of Illinois, held at Springfield in October, 1854. To this Mr. Lincoln merely replied, that no Republican State Convention was held at Springfield, or anywhere else, in 1854, and that he was not present at the *meeting* held there by a small number of persons, who nominated a candidate for State Treasurer; on the contrary, he was in another county, attending court. Having disposed of this matter for the present, he proceeded to occupy his time with the vital issues of the campaign, dwelling chiefly on the Dred Scott decision, and the peculiar reasons put forth by Mr. Douglas for sustaining it. "This man," said he, "sticks to a decision which forbids the people of a Territory from excluding slavery; and he does so not because he says it is right in itself—he does

not give any opinion on that—but because it has been *decided by the court*, and being decided by the court, he is, and you are, bound to take it in your political action as *law*—not that he judges at all of its merits, but because a decision of the court is to him a ‘*Thus saith the Lord.*’ He places it on that ground alone, and you will bear in mind that this committing himself unreservedly to this decision, *commits him to the next one* just as firmly as to this. He did not commit himself on account of the merit or demerit of the decision, but it is a *Thus saith the Lord.* The next decision, as much as this, will be a *Thus saith the Lord.*” Yet, as Mr. Lincoln proceeded to show, Mr. Douglas’s public record presented three glaring instances of violation of Supreme Court decisions: (1) his repeated indorsement of Gen. Jackson’s course in disregarding the decision of the Supreme Court declaring a National Bank constitutional; (2) his endorsement of the Cincinnati platform, which says that Congress *cannot* charter a National Bank, in the teeth of the Supreme Court decision, declaring that Congress *can* do so; (3) his notorious war upon the Supreme Court of Illinois which had decided that the Governor could not remove a Secretary of State, which ended in the appointment of five new judges, *of whom Douglas was one*, to vote down the four old ones. And here exactly was the time and place where Mr. Douglas acquired his title of “Judge”! “These things,” continued Mr. Lincoln, “show there is a purpose, *strong as death and eternity*, for which he adheres to this decision, and for which he will adhere to *all other decisions* of the same court.”

The following eloquent paragraph concluded the Ottawa debate, on Mr. Lincoln’s part:—

“Now, having spoken of the Dred Scott decision, one more word, and I am done. Henry Clay, my beau ideal of a statesman, the man for whom I fought all my humble life—Henry Clay once said of a class of men who would repress all tendencies to liberty and ultimate emancipation, that they must, if they would do this, go back to the era of our independence, and muzzle the cannon which thunders its annual joyous return; they must blow out the moral lights around us; they must penetrate the human soul, and eradicate there the love of liberty; and then, and not till then, could they perpetuate slavery in this country! To my thinking, Judge Douglas is, by his example and vast influence, doing that very thing in this community, when he says that the negro has nothing in the Declaration of Independence. Henry Clay plainly understood the contrary. Judge Douglas is going back to the epoch of our Revolution, and, to the extent of his ability, muzzling the cannon which thunders its annual joyous return. When he invites any people, willing to have slavery, to establish it, he is blowing out the moral lights around us. When he says, he “cares not whether slavery is voted down or voted up”—that it is a sacred right of self-government—he is, in my judgment, penetrating the human soul, and eradicating the light of reason and the love of liberty in the American people. And now I will only say, that when, by all these means and appliances, Judge Douglas shall succeed in bringing public sentiment to an exact accordance with his own views—when these vast assemblages shall echo back all these sentiments—when they shall come to repeat his views and to avow his principles, and to say all that he says on these mighty questions—then it needs only the formality of the second Dred Scott decision, which he endorses in advance, to make slavery alike lawful in all the States, old as well as new, North as well as South.”

When Mr. Douglas had occupied his half-hour, and the debate was finished, Mr. Lincoln was borne away from the stand on the shoulders of his friends, in a frenzy of enthusiasm.

Directly after the Ottawa debate, it was discovered that the resolutions which Mr. Douglas produced there, and declared to have been written by



Mr. Lincoln, at Springfield, in 1854, were never adopted at that place by *any body*, but had been passed by a local convention at Aurora, Kane county. Common people very naturally called it a forgery. At the Freeport debate, six days later, Mr. Lincoln referred to it in the following crushing paragraph:—

"I allude to this extraordinary matter in this canvass for some further purpose than anything yet advanced. Judge Douglas did not make his statement upon that occasion as of matters that he believed to be true, but he stated them roundly as *being true*, in such form as to pledge his veracity for their truth. When the whole matter turns out as it does, and when we consider who Judge Douglas is—that he is a distinguished Senator of the United States—that he has served nearly twelve years as such—that his character is not at all limited as an ordinary Senator of the United States, but that his name has become of world-wide renown—it is *most extraordinary* that he should so far forget all the suggestions of justice to an adversary, or of prudence to himself, as to venture upon the assertion of that which the slightest investigation would have shown him to be wholly false. I can only account for his having done so upon the supposition that that evil genius which has attended him through his life, giving to him an astonishing prosperity, such as to lead very many good men to doubt there being any advantage in virtue over vice—I say, I can only account for it on the supposition that that evil genius has at last made up its mind to forsake him."

The questions propounded by Mr. Douglas to his antagonist at Ottawa were still outstanding, unanswered. At Freeport, Mr. Lincoln took them up, and replied to them *seriatim*, as follows:—

Question 1. "I desire to know whether Lincoln to-day stands pledged, as he did in 1854, in favor of the unconditional repeal of the Fugitive Slave law?"

Answer. I do not now, nor ever did, stand pledged in favor of the unconditional repeal of the Fugitive Slave law.

Q. 2. "I desire him to answer whether he stands pledged to-day, as he did in 1854, against the admission of any more slave States into the Union, even if the people want them?"

A. I do not now, nor ever did, stand pledged against the admission of any more slave States into the Union.

Q. 3. "I want to know whether he stands pledged against the admission of a new State into the Union with such a Constitution as the people of that State may see fit to make?"

A. I do not stand pledged against the admission of a new State into the Union, with such a Constitution as the people of that State may see fit to make.

Q. 4. "I want to know whether he stands to-day pledged to the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia?"

A. I do not stand to-day pledged to the abolition of slavery in the district of Columbia.

Q. 5. "I desire him to answer whether he stands pledged to the prohibition of the slave-trade between the different States?"

A. I do not stand pledged to the prohibition of the slave-trade between the different States.

Q. 6. "I desire to know whether he stands pledged to prohibit slavery in all the Territories of the United States, North as well as South of the Missouri Compromise line?"

A. I am impliedly, if not expressly, pledged to a belief in the *right* and *duty* of Congress to prohibit slavery in all the United States' Territories.

Q. 7. "I desire him to answer whether he is opposed to the acquisition of any new territory unless slavery is first prohibited therein?"

A. I am not generally opposed to honest acquisition of territory; and, in any given case, I would or would not oppose such acquisition, according as I might think such acquisition would or would not aggravate the slavery question among ourselves.

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Now, my friends, it will be perceived, upon an examination of these questions and answers, that so far I have only answered that I was not *pledged* to this, that or the other. The Judge has not framed his interrogatories to ask me anything more than this, and I have answered in strict accordance with the interrogatories, and have answered truly that I am not *pledged* at all upon any of the points to which I have answered. But I am not disposed to hang upon the exact form of his interrogatory. I am rather disposed to take up at least some of these questions, and state what I really think upon them.

As to the first one, in regard to the Fugitive Slave law, I have never hesitated to say, and I do not now hesitate to say, that I think, under the Constitution of the United States, the people of the Southern States are entitled to a Congressional Fugitive Slave law. Having said that, I have had nothing to say in regard to the existing Fugitive Slave law, further than that I think it should have been framed so as to be free from some of the objections that pertain to it, without lessening its efficiency. And inasmuch as we are not now in an agitation in regard to an alteration or modification of that law, I would not be the man to introduce it as a new subject of agitation upon the general question of slavery.

In regard to the other question, of whether I am pledged to the admission of any more slave States into the Union, I state to you very frankly that I would be exceedingly sorry ever to be put in a position of having to pass upon that question. I should be exceedingly glad to know that there would never be another slave State admitted into the Union; but I must add that, if slavery shall be kept out of the Territories during the territorial existence of any one given Territory, and then the people shall, having a fair chance and a clear field, when they come to adopt the Constitution, do such an extraordinary thing as to adopt a Slave Constitution, uninfluenced by the actual presence of the institution among them, I see no alternative, if we own the country, but to admit them into the Union.

The third interrogatory is answered by the answer to the second, it being, as I conceive, the same as the second.

The fourth one is in regard to the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia. In relation to that, I have my mind very distinctly made up. I should be exceedingly glad to see slavery abolished in the District of Columbia. I believe that Congress possesses the Constitutional power to abolish it. Yet as a member of Congress, I should not, with my present views, be in favor of *endeavoring* to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia, unless it would be upon these conditions: *First*, that the abolition should be gradual. *Second*, that it should be on a vote of the majority of qualified voters in the District; and *third*, that compensation should be made to unwilling owners. With these three conditions, I confess I would be exceedingly glad to see Congress abolish slavery in the District of Columbia, and, in the language of Henry Clay, "sweep from our Capital that foul blot upon our nation."

In regard to the fifth interrogatory, I must say here, that as to the question of the abolition of slave-trade between the different States, I can truly answer, as I have, that I am *pledged* to nothing about it. It is a subject to which I have not given that mature consideration that would make me feel authorized to state a position so as to hold myself entirely bound by it. In other words, that question has never been prominently enough before me to induce me to investigate whether we really have the constitutional power to do it. I could investigate it if I had sufficient time, to bring myself to a conclusion upon that subject; but I have not done so, and I say so frankly to you here, and to Judge Douglas. I must say, however, that if I should be of opinion that Congress does possess the constitutional power to abolish the slave-trade among the different States, I should still not be in favor of the exercise of that power unless upon some conservative principle, as I conceive it, akin to what I have said in relation to the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia.

My answer as to whether I desire that slavery should be prohibited in all the Territories of the United States, is full and explicit within itself, and cannot be made clearer by any comments of mine. So I suppose in regard to the question whether I am opposed to the acquisition of any more territory unless slavery is first prohibited therein, my answer is such that I could add nothing by way of illustration, or making myself better understood, than the answer which I have placed in writing.

Mr. Lincoln having answered all the questions propounded by his adversary, as Senator Benjamin observes, "with no equivocation, no



evasion," it now became his turn to interrogate. The two prominent facts of the campaign, in Mr. Lincoln's view, were "Popular Sovereignty," so called, and the Dred Scott decision—each a sham and a fraud, yet directly antagonistic. Mr. Lincoln therefore resolved to present them to Mr. Douglas in the form of a brief interrogatory, so worded that even the latter could find no avenue for escaping or dodging the contradiction. He mentioned to some of his friends at Freeport that such was his purpose. They unanimously counseled him to let that topic alone, "for," said they "if you put that question to him, he will perceive that an answer giving practical force and effect to the Dred Scott decision in the Territories inevitably loses him the battle, and he will therefore reply by affirming the decision as an abstract principle, but denying its practical application." "But," said Mr. Lincoln, "if he does that, he can never be President." His friends replied, with one voice, "That's not your look-out; you are after the *Senatorship*." "No, gentlemen," rejoined Mr. Lincoln, "*I am killing larger game*. The battle of 1860 is worth a hundred of this!" So the questions were put, and Mr. Douglas was forced to avow his dogma of "unfriendly legislation." His present position as the candidate for the Presidency of a faction of his party, verifies Mr. Lincoln's prediction.

The third joint discussion was held nineteen days later, at Jonesborough, Union County (Lower Egypt), on the 15th of September. The intervening time was occupied by Mr. Lincoln in active canvassing. He spoke successively to large audiences at Fremont, Carlinville, Clinton, Bloomington, Monticello, Mattoon, Paris, Hillsborough, Edwardsville, and Greenville.

At Edwardsville, Madison County, Mr. Lincoln had comparatively a small audience—three or four hundred, perhaps. This county was one of four in the State which gave a plurality for Mr. Fillmore in 1856—the vote standing: Fillmore, 1,658; Buchanan, 1,451; Fremont, 1,111. Notwithstanding the "conservative" character of the people of this latitude, Mr. Lincoln gave them a straightforward Republican speech, without altering or modifying a syllable of the party creed, concluding with the following masterly appeal to the reason and consciences of his hearers:

"My friends, I have endeavored to show you the logical consequences of the Dred Scott decision, which holds that the people of a Territory cannot prevent the establishment of slavery in their midst. I have stated what cannot be gainsayed, that the grounds upon which this decision is made are equally applicable to the Free States as to the Free Territories, and that the peculiar reasons put forth by Judge Douglas for indorsing this decision, commit him in advance to the next decision, and to all other decisions emanating from the same source. And, when by all these means you have succeeded in dehumanizing the negro; when you have put him down, and made it impossible for him to be but as the beasts of the field; when you have extinguished his soul, and placed him where the ray of hope is blown out in the darkness that broods over the damned, are you quite sure the demon you have roused will not turn and rend you? What constitutes the bulwark of our liberty and independence? It is not our frowning battlements, our bristling sea-coasts, the guns of our war steamers, or the strength of our gallant army. These are not our reliance against a resumption of tyranny in our land. All of them may be turned against our liberties without making us stronger or weaker for the struggle. Our reliance is in the love of liberty which God has planted in our bosoms. Our defense is in the preservation of the spirit which prizes liberty as the heritage of *all men, in all lands, everywhere*. Destroy this spirit, and you have planted the seeds of despotism around your own doors. Familiarize your



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selves with the chains of bondage, and you are preparing your own limbs to wear them. Accustomed to trample on the rights of those around you, you have lost the genius of your own independence, and become the fit subjects of the first cunning tyrant who rises among you. And let me tell you that all these things are prepared for you with the logic of history, if the elections shall promise that the next Dred Scott decision and all future decisions will be quietly acquiesced in by the people."

After making a similar speech at Greenville, Bond County, whose vote stood in 1856 Fillmore, 659; Buchanan, 607; Fremont, 153,—but which was nevertheless carried in 1858 by Mr. Gillespie, the Republican candidate for State Senator—Mr. Lincoln proceeded to the Jonesborough "milk-pan," as he facetiously termed it, because Mr. Douglas had said at Ottawa, in his usual ornate style, that he was "going to trot him (Mr. L.) down to Egypt, and bring him to his milk." In this debate, Mr. Lincoln devoted considerable attention to the "unfriendly legislation" dodge, clearly demonstrating that, if the Constitution confers the right of taking slaves into the territories, the territorial legislature cannot annul the right, and that Congress is bound to give the slaveholder ample protection in the enjoyment of that right, should the territorial legislature neglect to do so. Subsequently, in a speech at Columbus, Ohio, Mr. Lincoln gave the finishing blow to "unfriendly legislation," in the following terse and admirable definition:—

"The Dred Scott decision expressly gives every citizen of the United States a right to carry his slaves into the United States' Territories. And now there was some inconsistency in saying that the decision was right, and saying, too, that the people of the Territory could lawfully drive slavery out again. When all the trash, the words, the collateral matter, was cleared away from it—all the chaff was fanned out of it, it was a bare absurdity—*no less than that a thing may be lawfully driven away from where it has a lawful right to be.*

The fourth joint discussion, took place at Charleston, Coles County, on the 18th of September, three days after the Jonesboro' debate, Mr. Lincoln having the opening and closing. This debate was remarkable chiefly for the fact that Mr. Lincoln fastened upon his antagonist, by incontrovertible proof, the charge of having conspired with Senator Toombs and others to bring Kansas into the Union, without having her Constitution submitted to a vote of the people, *for the purpose of making her a slave State*. Whoever will turn to that debate and examine the proofs presented by Mr. Lincoln, cannot possibly entertain a doubt as to the existence of such a conspiracy, and that Douglas was a party to it.

"Negro equality," the peculiar bugaboo of Mr. Douglas, also received a few moments' attention from Mr. Lincoln at Charleston, in these words:

"While I was at the hotel to-day, an elderly gentleman called upon me to know whether I was really in favor of producing a perfect equality between the negroes and white people. While I had not proposed to myself on this occasion to say much on that subject, yet as the question was asked me I thought I would occupy perhaps five minutes in saying something in regard to it. I will say, then, that I am not, nor ever have been, in favor of bringing about in any way the social and political equality of the white and black races—that I am not nor ever have been in favor of making voters or jurors of negroes, nor of qualifying them to hold office, nor to intermarry with white people; and I will say, in addition to this, that there is a physical difference between the white and black races which I believe will forever forbid the two races living together on terms of social and political equality. And, inasmuch as they cannot so live, while they do remain together there must be the position of superior and inferior, and I as much as any other man am in favor of having the superior position assigned to the white race. I say upon this occasion, I do not perceive that, because the white

man is to have the superior position, the negro should be denied everything. I do not understand that because I do not want a negro woman for a slave I must necessarily want her for a wife. My understanding is that I can just let her alone. I am now in my fiftieth year, and I certainly never have had a black woman for either a slave or a wife. So it seems to me quite possible for us to get along without making either slaves or wives of negroes. I will add to this, that I have never seen, to my knowledge, a man, woman, or child, who was in favor of producing a perfect equality, social and political, between negroes and white men. I recollect of but one distinguished instance that I ever heard of so frequently as to be entirely satisfied of its correctness—and that is the case of Judge Douglas's old friend, Col. Richard M. Johnson. I will also add to the remarks I have made, (for I am not going to enter at large upon this subject,) that I have never had the apprehension that I or my friends would marry negroes if there was no law to keep them from it; but as Judge Douglas and his friends seem to be in great apprehension that they might, if there were no law to keep them from it, I give the most solemn pledge that I will to the very last stand by the law of this State, which forbids the marrying of white people with negroes. I will add one further word, which is this: that I do not understand that there is any place where an alteration of the social and political relations of the negro and the white man can be made except in the State Legislature—not in the Congress of the United States—and as I do not really apprehend the approach of any such thing myself, and as Judge Douglas seems to be in constant horror that some such danger is rapidly approaching, I propose, as the best means to prevent it, that the Judge be kept at home and placed in the State Legislature to fight the measure."

At the Galesburg debate, held on the 7th of October, Mr. Lincoln uttered the remarkable prediction concerning his adversary which we now see realized, in answer to one of Mr. Douglas' tirades about "sectionalism":

"I ask his attention also to the fact that, by the rule of nationality, he is himself fast becoming sectional. I ask his attention to the fact that his speeches would not go as current now south of the Ohio river as they have formerly gone there. I ask his attention to the fact that he felicitates himself today that all the Democrats of the free States are agreeing with him, while he omits to tell us that the Democrats of any slave State agree with him. If he has not thought of this, I commend to his consideration the evidence in his own declaration, on this day, of his becoming sectional too. I see it rapidly approaching. Whatever may be the result of this ephemeral contest between Judge Douglas and myself, I see the day rapidly approaching when his pill of sectionalism, which he has been thrusting down the throats of Republicans for years past, will be crowded down his own throat."

The sixth (Quincy) debate took place on the 13th of October. It was at this meeting that Mr. Lincoln made an argument to prove that the Dred Scott premise as to the constitutional right to take slaves into the territories, if carried to its logical results, would establish the right to take and hold them in the free States also. Subsequently, Mr. Douglas, in his Harper Magazine article, appropriated this argument of Mr. Lincoln to his own use, without giving credit therefor.

The reader who will take the trouble to examine the volume of these debates, will find that, while Mr. Lincoln made a new argument at each meeting, Mr. Douglas's portion of each debate was substantially a repetition of his first effort at Ottawa.

Two days later, on the 15th of October, the final encounter between the champions took place at Alton. This volume would be incomplete without the admirable summing up of the ISSUES OF THE CAMPAIGN there appropriately presented by Mr. Lincoln. Let no one fail to peruse it.

"I have stated upon former occasions, and I may as well state again, what I understand to be the real issue in this controversy between Judge Douglas and myself.



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On the point of my wanting to make war between the free and the slave States, there has been no issue between us. So, too, when he assumes that I am in favor of introducing a perfect social and political equality between the white and black races. These are false issues, upon which Judge Douglas has tried to force the controversy. There is no foundation in truth for the charge that I maintain either of these propositions. The real issue in this controversy—the one pressing upon every mind—is the sentiment on the part of one class that looks upon the institution of slavery *as a wrong*, and of another class that *does not* look upon it as a wrong. The sentiment that contemplates the institution of slavery in this country as a wrong is the sentiment of the Republican party. It is the sentiment around which all their actions—all their arguments circle—from which all their propositions radiate. They look upon it as being a moral, social, and political wrong; and while they contemplate it as such, they nevertheless have due regard for its actual existence among us, and the difficulties of getting rid of it in any satisfactory way, and to all the constitutional obligations thrown about it. Yet, having a due regard for these, they desire a policy in regard to it that looks to its not creating any more danger. They insist that it should, so far as may be, *be treated as a wrong*, and one of the methods of treating it as a wrong is to *make provision that it shall grow no larger*. They also desire a policy that looks to a peaceful end of slavery at some time, as being wrong. These are the views they entertain in regard to it, as I understand them; and all their sentiments—all their arguments and propositions—are brought within this range. I have said, and I repeat it here, that if there be a man amongst us who does not think that the institution of slavery is wrong in any one of the aspects of which I have spoken, he is misplaced, and ought not to be with us. And if there be a man amongst us who is so impatient of it as a wrong as to disregard its actual presence among us and the difficulty of getting rid of it suddenly in a satisfactory way, and to disregard the constitutional obligations thrown about it, that man is misplaced if he is on our platform. We disclaim sympathy with him in practical action. He is not placed properly with us.

On this subject of treating it as a wrong, and limiting its spread, let me say a word. Has anything ever threatened the existence of this Union save and except this very institution of slavery? What is it that we hold most dear amongst us? Our own liberty and prosperity. What has ever threatened our liberty and prosperity save and except this institution of slavery? If this is true, how do you propose to improve the conditions of things by enlarging slavery—by spreading it out and making it bigger? You may have a wen or cancer upon your person and not be able to cut it out lest you bleed to death; but surely it is no way to cure it, to engraft it and spread it over your whole body. That is no proper way of treating what you regard as a wrong. You see this peaceful way of dealing with it as a wrong—restricting the spread of it, and not allowing it to go into new countries where it has not already existed. That is the peaceful way, the old-fashioned way, the way in which the fathers themselves set us the example.

On the other hand, I have said there is a sentiment which treats it as *not* being wrong. That is the Democratic sentiment of this day. I do not mean to say that every man who stands within that range positively asserts that it is right. That class will include all who positively assert that it is right, and all who like Judge Douglas treat it as indifferent, and do not say it is either right or wrong. These two classes of men fall within the general class of those who do not look upon it as a wrong. And if there be among you anybody who supposes that he, as a Democrat, can consider himself “as much opposed to slavery as anybody,” I would like to reason with him. You never treat it as a wrong. What other thing that you consider as a wrong do you deal with as you deal with that? Perhaps you say it is wrong, *but your leader never does, and you quarrel with anybody who says it is wrong*. Although you pretend to say so yourself, you can find no fit place to deal with it as a wrong. You must not say anything about it in the free States, *because it is not here*. You must not say anything about it in the slave States, *because it is there*. You must not say anything about it in the pulpit, because that is religion and has nothing to do with it. You must not say anything about it in politics, *because that will disturb the security of “my place.”* There is no place to talk about it as being a wrong, although you say yourself it is a wrong. But finally, you will screw yourself up to the belief that if the people of the slave States should adopt a system of gradual emancipation on the slavery question, you would be in favor of it. You say that is getting it in the right place, and you would be glad to see it succeed. But you are deceiving yourself. You all know that Frank Blair and Gratz Brown undertook to introduce that system in Missouri. They fought



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as valiantly as they could for the system of gradual emancipation which you pretend you would be glad to see succeed. Now I will bring you to the test. After a hard fight, they were beaten, and when the news came over here you threw up your hats and *hurrahed for Democracy*. More than that, take all the argument made in favor of the system you have proposed, and it carefully excludes the idea that there is anything wrong in the institution of slavery. The arguments to sustain that policy carefully exclude it. Even here today, you heard Judge Douglas quarrel with me because I uttered a wish that it might sometime come to an end. Although Henry Clay could say he wished every slave in the United States was in the country of his ancestors, I am denounced by those pretending to respect Henry Clay for uttering a wish that it might sometime, in some peaceful way, come to an end. The Democratic policy in regard to that institution will not tolerate the merest breath, the slightest hint, of the least degree of wrong about it. Try it by some of Judge Douglas's arguments. He says he "don't care whether it it voted up or voted down" in the Territories. I do not care myself, in dealing with that expression, whether it is intended to be expressive of his individual sentiments on the subject, or only of the national policy he desires to have established. It is alike valuable for my purpose. Any man can say that who does not see anything wrong in slavery, but no man can logically say it who does see a wrong in it; because no man can logically say he don't care whether a wrong is voted up or voted down. He may say he don't care whether an indifferent thing is voted up or down, but he must logically have a choice between a right thing and a wrong thing. He contends that whatever community wants slaves has a right to have them. So they have if it is not a wrong. But if it is a wrong, he cannot say people have a right to do wrong. He says that, upon the score of equality, slaves should be allowed to go into a new Territory, like other property. This is strictly logical if there is no difference between it and other property. If it and other property are equal, his argument is entirely logical. But if you insist that one is wrong and the other right, there is no use to institute a comparison between right and wrong. You may turn over every thing in the Democratic policy from beginning to end, whether in the shape it takes on the statute-book, in the shape it takes in the Dred Scott decision, in the shape it takes in conversation, or the shape it takes in short, maxim-like arguments—it every where carefully excludes the idea that there is anything wrong in it.

That is the real issue. That is the issue that will continue in this country when these poor tongues of Judge Douglas and myself shall be silent. It is the eternal struggle between these two principles—right and wrong—throughout the world. They are the two principles that have stood face to face from the beginning of time; and will ever continue to struggle. The one is the common right of humanity, and the other the divine right of kings. It is the same principle in whatever shape it develops itself. It is the same right that says, "You work and toil and earn bread, and I'll eat it." No matter in what shape it comes, whether from the mouth of a king who seeks to bestride the people of his own nation and live by the fruit of their labor, or from one race of men as an apology for enslaving another race, it is the same tyrannical principle. I was glad to express my gratitude at Quincy, and I re-express it here to Judge Douglas—that he looks to no end of the institution of slavery. That will help the people to see where the struggle really is. It will hereafter place with us all men who really do wish the wrong may have an end. And whenever we can get rid of the fog which obscures the real question—when we can get Judge Douglas and his friends to avow a policy looking to its perpetuation—we can get out from among them that class of men and bring them to the side of those who treat it as a wrong. Then there will soon be an end of it, and that will be its "ultimate extinction." Whenever the issue can be distinctly made, and all extraneous matter thrown out, so that men can fairly see the real difference between the parties, this controversy will soon be settled, and it will be done peaceably, too. There will be no war, no violence. It will be placed again where the wisest and best men of the world placed it. Brooks of South Carolina once declared that, when this Constitution was framed, its framers did not look to the institution existing until this day. When he said this, I think he stated a fact that is fully borne out by the history of the times. But he also said they were better and wiser men than the men of these days; yet the men of these days had experience which they had not, and by the invention of the cotton-gin it became a necessity in this country that slavery should be perpetual. I now say that, willingly or unwillingly, purposely or without purpose, Judge Douglas has been the most prominent instrument in changing the position of the institution of slavery which the fathers of the Govern-

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ment expected to come to an end ere this—and *putting it upon Brook's cotton-gin basis*—placing it where he openly confesses he has no desire there shall ever be an end of it.

The canvass was now finished—a canvass in some respects the most remarkable ever witnessed in this country—and nought remained but for the people to record their verdict. Each of the speakers addressed public meetings up to the day of election. Mr. Lincoln made about sixty speeches during the canvass, traversing almost the entire State, by nearly every conceivable mode of travel. He spoke usually from two to three hours, nearly always in the open air, and to audiences so large as to require great effort on his part to be heard distinctly by all. During these arduous labors, he never once faltered, never exhibited signs of weariness, never failed to meet an appointment. He seemed to grow fresher and stronger as the campaign progressed. Exercise in the open air, travel, and the excitement incident to the canvass, were, in some respects, a return to the habits of his early life, and the effect was plainly visible upon his physical man. His voice grew clearer and stronger to the very last day; and at the close he was heavier by nearly twenty pounds than at the beginning of the canvass. He exhibited powers of endurance that have rarely been equaled. The gallant manner in which he bore himself at his meetings with Douglas, and the transcendent ability which he displayed on all occasions, more than satisfied his friends. His progress through the State had all the characteristics of a triumphal march. He was met by large deputations from every town which he entered, tending him, in behalf of its citizens, a cordial welcome to their hospitalities and a warm place in their affections. The subsequent publication of his debates with Douglas, precisely as they were reported by the respective friends, without a word of comment or explanation, and its general circulation as a Republican campaign document, is the highest testimonial that could be offered to the genius, to the ability, to the broad and comprehensive views, and to the statesmanlike character of Mr. Lincoln.

The election took place on the 2d of November. The excitement which had wrought the State up to a tempest during the progress of the fight, culminated on this eventful day. The whole number of votes cast for President in Illinois, in 1856, was 238,981; the whole number cast for members of the Legislature in 1858, was 251,148. A drenching and chilling rain poured down all day in the northern part of the State, extending southward, with more or less discomfort to voters, so far as Vandalia. It did not, however, reach "Lower Egypt." The result of the election is matter of history. Mr. Lincoln had a majority over Mr. Douglas, in the popular vote, of 4,085; while, by an unfair apportionment law, the latter had a small majority of the Legislature, and was therefore re-elected to the Senate. A careful analysis of the official returns reveals the following facts:

1st. That according to the census of 1855, the 33 districts carried by the Democrats, and electing 40 members, contained 606,278 population, and the 25 districts carried by the Republicans and electing 35 members, contained 699,840 population, or 93,562 more than the districts carried by the Democrats.

2d. That in a Democratic district the ratio of representation was 15,156 inhabitants to a member, while in Republican districts, it required 19,910 inhabitants to a member.

3d. That the true ratio being 17,421 inhabitants to a member, had the Legislature been elected on that basis, the Republican districts would have been entitled to FORTY members of the House and *fourteen* Senators, and the Democrats to *thirty-five* members of the House and *eleven* Senators—exactly reversing the number each side secured. Of course, this would have elected Lincoln by the same majority on joint ballot that Douglas received. Had every citizen possessed an equal weight and voice in the choice of Senator, Mr. Douglas would now be a private citizen and Mr. Lincoln a member of the U. S. Senate. Mr. Douglas is a Senator from Illinois through a palpable violation of the principles of popular sovereignty.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In February, 1860, Mr. Lincoln delivered an address at Cooper Institute, New York City. For close reasoning, broad outlook, historical accuracy, and true eloquence, Horace Greeley believed it to be the greatest speech he had ever heard, not excluding those by Webster. This speech gave Mr. Lincoln the confidence of the East and a favorable reception there as a candidate for the Presidency. (Putnam, 215-266; Nicolay & Hay, 599-629)



## CONCLUSION

The man whose history we have thus briefly traced now stands before the country the chosen candidate of the Republican party for President of the United States.<sup>1</sup> Commencing life under circumstances the most discouraging, we have seen him courageously and manfully battling his way upward from one position of honor and responsibility to another, until he now stands in an attitude to place his foot upon the very topmost round of honorable fame. He presents in his own person the best living illustration of the true dignity of labor, and of the genius of our free American institutions, having been elevated through their instrumentality from poverty and obscurity to his present distinguished position.

Perhaps no more appropriate conclusion can be given to this sketch of Mr. Lincoln's life, than the following, relative to his personal appearance, habits, tastes, &c., which is copied from the *Chicago Press and Tribune*, and for the correctness of which, in every particular, we can fully vouch:

"Mr. Lincoln stands six feet four inches high in his stockings. His frame is not muscular, but gaunt and wiry. In walking, his gait, though firm, is never brisk. He steps slowly and deliberately, almost always with his head inclined forward, and his hands clasped behind his back. In manner, he is remarkably cordial, and at the same time simple. His politeness is always sincere, but never elaborate and oppressive. A warm shake of the hand and a warmer smile of recognition are his methods of greeting his friends. At rest, his features, though they are those of a man of mark, are not such as belong to a handsome man; but when his fine, dark-grey eyes are lighted up by any emotion, and his features begin their play, he would be chosen from among a crowd as one who had in him not only the kindly sentiments which women love, but the heavier metal of which full-grown men and Presidents are made. His hair is black, and though thin, is wiry. His head sits well on his shoulders, but beyond that it defies description. It nearer resembles that of Clay than Webster's, but is unlike either. It is very large, and phrenologically well proportioned, betokening power in all its developments. A slight Roman nose, a wide-cut mouth, and a dark complexion, with the appearance of having been weather-beaten, complete the description.

In his personal habits, Mr. Lincoln is as simple as a child. He loves a good dinner, and eats with the appetite which goes with a great brain, but his food is plain and nutritious. He never drinks intoxicating liquors of any sort. He is not addicted to tobacco in any of its shapes. He was never accused of a licentious act in his life. He never uses profane language. He never gambles. He is particularly cautious about incurring pecuniary obligations for any purpose whatever; and, in debt, he is never content until the score is discharged. We presume he owes no man a dollar. He never speculates. The rage for the sudden acquisition of wealth never took hold of him. His gains from his profession have been moderate, but sufficient for his purposes. While others have dreamed of gold, he has been in pursuit of knowledge. In all his dealings,

<sup>1</sup> The grasp that Lincoln had of the slavery problem, in all its phases; his ability to analyze it, historically and constitutionally, as no one else had ever done; and a character that gave him the confidence of all factions of his party, made him its logical candidate for President. He was nominated on the third ballot at the National Republican Convention held at Chicago in May, 1860. The votes opposed to him were divided among Douglas, Breckenridge, and Bell; so he was elected, receiving 180 of the 303 electoral votes.

His career from the time of his election as President until his death is largely a matter of official records, and it has been minutely described by many historians and biographers.

We can now view his life, and his evolution, through a perspective of over sixty years; and we acclaim him our First American. Wells, probably the greatest of modern historians, gives him a place among the six greatest characters of history.

The study of Lincoln's rise from obscurity to eminence is a fascinating one; and those students who are unwilling to accept the miraculous as a solution for every difficult problem, eventually see, at first dimly, then clearly, that Lincoln was the natural product of his ancestry, his training, his environment, and the times in which he lived; that with his inheritance as a foundation, his training, his environment, and fortuitous circumstances fashioned his final personality; that he grew in wisdom, understanding, power, and character until the evening of his last day.

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he has the reputation of being generous but exact, and, above all, religiously honest. He would be a bold man who would say that Abraham Lincoln ever wronged a man out of a cent, or ever spent a dollar that he had not honestly earned. His struggles in early life have made him careful of money, but his generosity with his own is proverbial. He is a regular attendant upon religious worship, and, though not a communicant, is a pew-holder and liberal supporter of the Presbyterian Church in Springfield, to which Mrs. Lincoln belongs. He is a scrupulous teller of the truth—too exact in his notions to suit the atmosphere of Washington, as it now is. His enemies may say that he tells Black Republican lies; but no man ever charged that, in a professional capacity, or as a citizen dealing with his neighbors, he would depart from the Scriptural command. At home, he lives like a gentleman of modest means and simple tastes. A good-sized house of wood, simply but tastefully furnished, surrounded by trees and flowers, is his own; there he lives, at peace with himself, the idol of his family, and for his honesty, ability and patriotism, the admiration of his countrymen.

If Mr. Lincoln is elected President, he will carry but little that is ornamental to the White House. The country must accept his sincerity, his ability, and his honesty, in the mould in which they are cast. He will not be able to make so polite a bow as Franklin Pierce, but he will not commence anew the agitation of the slavery question by recommending to Congress any Kansas-Nebraska Bills. He may not preside at the Presidential dinners with the ease and grace which distinguished the "venerable public functionary," Mr. Buchanan; but he will not create the necessity for a Covode Committee and the disgraceful revelations of Cornelius Wendell. He will take to the Presidential Chair just the qualities which the country now demands to save it from impending destruction—ability that no man can question, firmness that nothing can overbear, honesty that never has been impeached, and patriotism that never despairs."

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